Elements of Criticism

CLASSICS IN ART
and
LITERARY CRITICISM

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ELEMENTS

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ELEMENTS

OF

CRITICISM.

CHAP. XIX.

COMPARISONS.

COMPARISONS, as obſerved above *, ſerve two different purpoſes: When addreſſed to the underſtanding, their purpoſe is to inſtruct; when to the heart, their purpoſe is to give pleaſure. With reſpect to the latter, a compariſon may be employ'd to produce various pleaſures by different means. Firſt, by ſuggeſting ſome unuſual

* Chap. 8.

reſemblance or contraſt: ſecond, by ſetting an object in the ſtrongeſt light: third, by aſſociating an object with others that are agreeable: fourth, by elevating an object: and, fifth, by depreſſing it. And that compariſons may produce various pleaſures by theſe different means, appears from what is ſaid in the chapter above cited; and will be made ſtill more evident by examples, which ſhall be given after premiſing ſome general obſervations.

An object of one ſenſe cannot be compared to an object of another; for ſuch objects are totally ſeparated from each other, and have no circumſtance in common to admit either reſemblance or contraſt. Objects of hearing may be compared, as alſo of taſte, and of touch. But the chief fund of compariſon are objects of ſight; becauſe, in writing or ſpeaking, things can only be compared in idea, and the ideas of viſible objects are by far more lively than thoſe of any other ſenſe.

It has no good effect to compare things by way of ſimile that are of the ſame kind, nor to contraſt things of different kinds.

The

The reaſon is given in the chapter cited above; and the reaſon ſhall be illuſtrated by examples. The firſt is a reſemblance inſtituted betwixt two objects ſo nearly related as to make little or no impreſſion.

This juſt rebuke inflam'd the Lycian crew,
They join, they thicken, and th' aſſault renew;
Unmov'd th'embody'd Greeks their fury dare,
And fix'd ſupport the weight of all the war;
Nor could the Greeks repel the Lycian pow'rs,
Nor the bold Lycians force the Grecian tow'rs.
As on the confines of adjoining grounds,
Two ſtubborn ſwains with blows diſpute their bounds;
They tugg, they ſweat; but neither gain, nor yield,
One foot, one inch, of the contended field:
Thus obſtinate to death, they fight, they fall;
Nor theſe can keep, nor thoſe can win the wall.
Iliad, xii. 505.

Another from Milton labours under the ſame defect. Speaking of the fallen angels ſearching for mines of gold:

A numerous brigade haſten'd: as when bands
Of pioneers with ſpade and pick-ax arm'd
Forerun

Forerun the royal camp to trench a field
Or caſt a rampart.

The next ſhall be of things contraſted that are of different kinds.

Queen. What, is my Richard both in ſhape and mind
Transform'd and weak? Hath Bolingbroke depos'd
Thine intellect? Hath he been in thy heart?
The lion, dying, thruſteth forth his paw,
And wounds the earth, if nothing elſe, with rage
To be o'erpower'd: and wilt thou, pupil-like,
Take thy correction mildly, kiſs the rod,
And fawn on rage with baſe humility?

Richard II. *act* 5. *ſc.* 1.

This compariſon has ſcarce any force. A man and a lion are of different ſpecies; and there is no ſuch reſemblance betwixt them in general, as to produce any ſtrong effect by contraſting particular attributes or circumſtances.

A third general obſervation is, That abſtract terms can never be the ſubject of compariſon, otherwiſe than by being perſonified.

Shakeſpear

Shakeſpear compares adverſity to a toad, and ſlander to the bite of a crocodile; but in ſuch compariſons theſe abſtract terms muſt be imagined ſenſible beings.

I now proceed to illuſtrate by particular inſtances the different means by which compariſon can afford pleaſure; and, in the order above eſtabliſhed, I ſhall begin with thoſe inſtances that are agreeable by ſuggeſting ſome unuſual reſemblance or contraſt:

Sweet are the uſes of Adverſity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in her head
As you like it, act 2. *ſc.* 1.

Gardiner. Bolingbroke hath ſeiz'd the waſteful King.
What pity is't that he had not ſo trimm'd
And dreſs'd his land, as we this garden dreſs,
And wound the bark, the ſkin of our fruit-trees;
Leſt, being over proud with ſap and blood,
With too much riches it confound itſelf.
Had he done ſo to great and growing men,
They might have liv'd to bear, and he to taſte
Their fruits of duty. All ſuperfluous branches

We

We lop away, that bearing boughs may live:
Had he done ſo, himſelf had borne the crown,
Which waſte and idle hours have quite thrown down.

Richard II. *act* 3. *ſc.* 7.

See, how the Morning opes her golden gates,
And takes her farewell of the glorious ſun;
How well reſembles it the prime of youth,
Trim'd like a yonker prancing to his love.

Second Part Henry VI. *act* 2. *ſc.* 1.

Brutus. O Caſſius, you are yoked with a lamb,
That carries anger as the flint bears fire;
Who, much inforced, ſhows a haſty ſpark,
And ſtraight is cold again.

Julius Cæſar, act 4. *ſc.* 3.

Thus they their doubtful conſultations dark
Ended, rejoicing in their matchleſs chief:
As when from mountain-tops the duſky clouds,
Aſcending, while the North-wind ſleeps, o'erſpread
Heav'n's chearful face, the lowring element
Scowls o'er the darken'd landſcape, ſnow, and ſhower;
If chance the radiant ſun with farewell ſweet
Extend his ev'ning-beam, the fields revive,

The

The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Atteſt their joy, that hill and valley rings.
Paradiſe Loſt, book 2.

The laſt exertion of courage compared to the blaze of a lamp before extinguiſhing, *Taſſo Gieruſalem, canto* 19. *ſt.* 22.

As the bright ſtars, and milky way,
Shew'd by the night, are hid by day:
So we in that accompliſh'd mind,
Help'd by the night, new graces find,
Which, by the ſplendor of her view
Dazzled before, we never knew.
Waller.

None of the foregoing ſimiles, as it appears to me, have the effect to add any luſtre to the principal ſubject; and therefore the pleaſure they afford, muſt ariſe from ſuggeſting reſemblances that are not obvious: I mean the chief pleaſure; for undoubtedly a beautiful ſubject introduced to form the ſimile affords a ſeparate pleaſure, which is felt in the ſimiles mentioned, particularly in that cited from Milton.

The next effect of a compariſon in the

order mentioned, is to place an object in a ſtrong point of view; which I think is done ſenſibly in the following ſimiles.

As when two ſcales are charg'd with doubtful loads,
From ſide to ſide the trembling balance nods,
(While ſome laborious matron, juſt and poor,
With nice exactneſs weighs her woolly ſtore),
Till pois'd aloft, the reſting beam ſuſpends
Each equal weight; nor this nor that deſcends:
So ſtood the war, till Hector's matchleſs might,
With fates prevailing, turn'd the ſcale of fight.
Fierce as a whirlwind up the walls he flies,
And fires his hoſt with loud repeated cries.

Iliad, b. xii. 521.

Ut flos in ſeptis ſecretis naſcitur hortis,
Ignotus pecori, nullo contuſus aratro,
Quem mulcent auræ, firmat ſol, educat imber,
Multi illum pueri, multæ cupiere puellæ.
Idem, cum tenui carptus defloruit ungui,
Nulli illum pueri, nullæ cupiere puellæ.
Sic virgo, dum intacta manet, dum cara ſuis; ſed
Cum caſtum amiſit, polluto corpore, florem,
Nec pueris jucunda manet, nec cara puellis.

Catullus.

The

The imitation of this beautiful ſimile by *Arioſto, canto* 1. *ſt.* 42. falls ſhort of the original. It is alſo in part imitated by Pope *.

Lucetta. I do not ſeek to quench your love's hot fire,
But qualify the fires extreme rage,
Leſt it ſhould burn above the bounds of reaſon.
Julia. The more thou damm'ſt it up, the more it burns:
The current, that with gentle murmur glides,
Thou know'ſt, being ſtopp'd, impatiently doth rage;
But when his fair courſe is not hindered,
He makes ſweet muſic with th' enamel'd ſtones
Giving a gentle kiſs to every ſedge
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage.
And ſo by many winding nooks he ſtrays
With willing ſport, to the wild ocean.
Then let me go, and hinder not my courſe;
I'll be as patient as a gentle ſtream,
And make a paſtime of each weary ſtep
Till the laſt ſtep have brought me to my love;
And there I'll reſt, as, after much turmoil,
A bleſſed ſoul doth in Elyſium.

Two Gentlemen of Verona, act 2. *ſc.* 10.

* Dunciad, b. 4. l. 405.

——— She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' th' bud,
Feed on her damaſk cheek: ſhe pin'd in thought;
And with a green and yellow melancholy,
She ſat like Patience on a monument,
Smiling at Grief.

Twelfth-Night, act 2. ſc. 6.

York. Then, as I ſaid, the Duke, great Bolingbroke,
Mounted upon a hot and fiery ſteed,
Which his aſpiring rider ſeem'd to know,
With ſlow but ſtately pace, kept on his courſe:
While all tongues cry'd, God ſave thee, Bolingbroke.

Ducheſs. Alas! poor Richard, where rides he the while?

York. As in a theatre, the eyes of men,
After a well-grac'd actor leaves the ſtage,
Are idly bent on him that enters next,
Thinking his prattle to be tedious:
Even ſo, or with much more contempt, mens eyes
Did ſcowl on Richard; no man cry'd, God ſave him!
No joyful tongue gave him his welcome home;
But duſt was thrown upon his ſacred head;
Which with ſuch gentle ſorrow he ſhook off,
His face ſtill combating with tears and ſmiles,

The

The badges of his grief and patience;
That had not God, for ſome ſtrong purpoſe, ſteel'd
The hearts of men, they muſt perforce have melted;
And barbariſm itſelf have pitied him.

Richard II. *act* 5. *ſc.* 3.

Northumberland. How doth my ſon and brother?
Thou trembleſt, and the whiteneſs in thy cheek
Is apter than thy tongue to tell thy errand.
Even ſuch a man, ſo faint, ſo ſpiritleſs,
So dull, ſo dead in look, ſo wo-be-gone,
Drew Priam's curtain in the dead of night,
And would have told him, half his Troy was burn'd;
But Priam found the fire, ere he his tongue:
And I my Percy's death, ere thou report'ſt it.

Second Part Henry IV. *act* 1. *ſc.* 3.

Why, then I do but dream on ſov'reignty,
Like one that ſtands upon a promontory,
And ſpies a far-off ſhore where he would tread,
Wiſhing his foot were equal with his eye,
And chides the ſea that ſunders him from thence,
Saying, he'll lave it dry to have his way:
So do I wiſh, the crown being ſo far off,
And ſo I chide the means that keep me from it,

And

And ſo (I ſay) I'll cut the cauſes off,
Flatt'ring my mind with things impoſſible.
Third Part Henry VI. *act* 3. *ſc.* 3.

——— Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking ſhadow, a poor player,
That ſtruts and frets his hour upon the ſtage,
And then is heard no more.
Macbeth, *act* 5. *ſc.* 5.

O thou Goddeſs,
Thou divine Nature! how thyſelf thou blazon'ſt
In theſe two princely boys! they are as gentle
As zephyrs blowing below the violet,
Not wagging his ſweet head; and yet as rough,
(Their royal blood inchaf'd) as the rud'ſt wind,
That by the top doth take the mountain-pine,
And make him ſtoop to th' vale.
Cymbeline, *act* 4. *ſc.* 4.

The ſight obtained of the city of Jeruſalem by the Chriſtian army, compared to that of land diſcovered after a long voyage, Taſſo's *Gieruſalem*, *canto* 3. *ſt.* 4. The fury of Rinaldo ſubſiding when not oppoſed, to that of wind or water when it has a free paſſage, *canto* 20. *ſt.* 58.

As

As words convey but a faint and obſcure notion of great numbers, a poet, to give a high notion of the object he deſcribes with regard to number, does well to compare it to what is familiar and commonly known. Thus Homer * compares the Grecian army in point of number to a ſwarm of bees. In another paſſage † he compares it to that profuſion of leaves and flowers which appear in the ſpring, or of inſects in a ſummer's evening. And Milton,

——————As when the potent rod
Of Amram's ſon in Egypt's evil day
Wav'd round the coaſt, up call'd a pitchy cloud
Of locuſts, warping on the eaſtern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
So numberleſs were thoſe bad angels ſeen,
Hovering on wing under the cope of hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and ſurrounding fires.
Paradiſe Loſt, book 1.

Such compariſons have, by ſome writers ‡, been condemned for the lowneſs of

* Book 2. l. 111. † Book 2. l. 551.
‡ See Vidæ Poetic. lib. 2. l. 282.

the

the images introduced: but ſurely without reaſon; for, with regard to numbers, they put the principal ſubject in a ſtrong light.

The foregoing compariſons operate by reſemblance; others have the ſame effect by contraſt:

York. I am the laſt of Noble Edward's ſons,
Of whom thy father, Prince of Wales, was firſt:
In war, was never lion rag'd more fierce;
In peace, was never gentle lamb more mild;
Than was that young and princely gentleman.
His face thou haſt; for even ſo look'd he,
Accompliſh'd with the number of thy hours.
But when he frown'd, it was againſt the French,
And not againſt his friends. His noble hand
Did win what he did ſpend; and ſpent not that
Which his triumphant father's hand had won.
His hands were guilty of no kindred's blood,
But bloody with the enemies of his kin.
Oh, Richard! York is too far gone with grief,
Or elſe he never would compare between.

Richard II. *act* 2. *ſc.* 3.

Milton has a peculiar talent in embelliſhing the principal ſubject by aſſociating it with others that are agreeable, which is the

the third end of a compariſon. Similes of this kind have, beſide, a ſeparate effect: they diverſify the narration by new images that are not ſtrictly neceſſary to the compariſon: they are ſhort epiſodes, which, without diſtracting us from the principal ſubject, afford great delight by their beauty and variety:

He ſcarce had ceas'd, when the ſuperior fiend
Was moving toward the ſhore; his pond'rous ſhield,
Ethereal temper, maſſy, large, and round,
Behind him caſt; the broad circumference
Hung on his ſhoulders like the moon, whoſe orb
Through optic glaſs the Tuſcan artiſt views
At ev'ning from the top of Feſole,
Or in Valdarno, to deſcry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains, in her ſpotty globe.
Milton, b. 1.

——— Thus far theſe, beyond
Compare of mortal proweſs, yet obſerv'd
Their dread commander. He, above the reſt
In ſhape and geſture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tow'r; his form had yet not loſt
All her original brightneſs, nor appear'd
Leſs than arch-angel ruin'd, and th' exceſs
Of glory obſcur'd: as when the ſun new-riſen

Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs.

Milton, b. 1.

As when a vulture on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey
To gorge the flesh of lambs, or yeanling kids,
On hills where flocks are fed, flies toward the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams,
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
With sails and wind their cany waggons light:
So on this windy sea of land, the fiend
Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey.

Milton, b. 3.

——————— Yet higher than their tops
The verdurous wall of Paradise up sprung:
Which to our general sire gave prospect large
Into this nether empire neighbouring round.
And higher than that wall, a circling row
Of goodliest trees loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
Appear'd, with gay enamel'd colours mix'd,

On

On which the ſun more glad impreſs'd his beams
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
When God hath ſhow'r'd the earth; ſo lovely ſeem'd
That landſcape: and of pure now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inſpires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All ſadneſs but deſpair: now gentle gales
Fanning their odoriferous wings diſpenſe
Native perfumes, and whiſper whence they ſtole
Thoſe balmy ſpoils. As when to them who ſail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are paſt
Mozambic, off at ſea North-eaſt winds blow
Sabean odour from the ſpicy ſhore
Of Arabie the Bleſt; with ſuch delay
Well pleas'd they ſlack their courſe, and many a league,
Chear'd with the grateful ſmell, old Ocean ſmiles.
Milton, b. 4.

With regard to ſimiles of this kind, it will readily occur to the reader, that when the reſembling ſubject or circumſtance is once properly introduced in a ſimile, the mind paſſes eaſily to the new objects, and is tranſitorily amuſed with them, without feeling any diſguſt at the ſlight interruption. Thus, in fine weather, the momentary excurſions of

a traveller for agreeable proſpects or ſumptuous buildings, chear his mind, relieve him from the langour of uniformity, and without much lengthening his journey in reality, ſhorten it greatly in appearance.

Next of compariſons that aggrandize or elevate. Theſe make ſtronger impreſſions than any other ſort; the reaſon of which may be gathered from the chapter of grandeur and ſublimity, and, without reaſoning, will be evident from the following inſtances.

As when a flame the winding valley fills,
And runs on crackling ſhrubs between the hills,
Then o'er the ſtubble up the mountain flies,
Fires the high woods, and blazes to the ſkies,
This way and that, the ſpreading torrent roars;
So ſweeps the hero through the waſted ſhores.
Around him wide, immenſe deſtruction pours,
And earth is delug'd with the ſanguine ſhow'rs.
Iliad xx. 569.

Through blood, through death, Achilles ſtill proceeds,
O'er ſlaughter'd heroes, and o'er rolling ſteeds.

As

As when avenging flames with fury driv'n
On guilty towns exert the wrath of Heav'n,
The pale inhabitants, ſome fall, ſome fly,
And the red vapours purple all the ſky.
So rag'd Achilles: Death, and dire diſmay,
And toils, and terrors, fill'd the dreadful day.
Iliad xxi. 605.

Methinks, King Richard and myſelf ſhould meet
With no leſs terror than the elements
Of fire and water, when their thund'ring ſhock,
At meeting tears the cloudy cheeks of heaven.
Richard II. *act.* 3. *ſc.* 5.

I beg peculiar attention to the following ſimile, for a reaſon that ſhall be mentioned.

Thus breathing death, in terrible array,
The cloſe-compacted legions urg'd their way:
Fierce they drove on, impatient to deſtroy;
Troy charg'd the firſt, and Hector firſt of Troy.
As from ſome mountain's craggy forehead torn,
A rock's round fragment flies with fury born,
(Which from the ſtubborn ſtone a torrent rends)
Precipitate the pond'rous maſs deſcends:
From ſteep to ſteep the rolling ruin bounds:
At every ſhock the crackling wood reſounds;
Still gath'ring force, it ſmoaks; and urg'd amain,
Whirls, leaps, and thunders down, impetuous to the plain:

There

There ſtops — So Hector. Their whole force he
prov'd,
Reſiſtleſs when he rag'd; and when he ſtopt, un-
mov'd.

Iliad xiii. 187.

The image of a falling rock is certainly not elevating *. Yet undoubtedly the foregoing image fires and ſwells the mind. It is grand therefore, if not ſublime. And that there is a real, though delicate diſtinction, betwixt theſe two feelings, will be illuſtrated from the following ſimile.

So ſaying, a noble ſtroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but ſo ſwift with tempeſt fell
On the proud creſt of Satan, that no ſight,
Nor motion of ſwift thought, leſs could his ſhield
Such ruin intercept. Ten paces huge
He back recoil'd; the tenth on bended knee
His maſſy ſpear upſtaid; as if on earth
Winds under ground or waters forcing way
Sidelong had puſh'd a mountain from his ſeat
Half ſunk with all pines.

Milton, b. 6.

* See chap. 4.

A compariſon by contraſt may contribute to grandeur or elevation, not leſs than by reſemblance; of which the following compariſon of Lucan is a remarkable inſtance.

Victrix cauſa diis placuit, ſed victa Catoni.

Conſidering that the Heathen deities poſſeſſed a rank but one degree above that of mankind, I think it ſcarce poſſible, by a ſingle expreſſion, to elevate or dignify more one of the human ſpecies, than is done by this compariſon. I am ſenſible, at the ſame time, that ſuch a compariſon among Chriſtians, who entertain juſter notions of the Deity, would juſtly be reckoned extravagant and abſurd.

The laſt article mentioned, is that of leſſening or depreſſing a hated or diſagreeable object; which is effectually done by reſembling it to any thing that is low or deſpicable. Thus Milton, in his deſcription of the rout of the rebel-angels, happily expreſſes their terror and diſmay in the following ſimile.

—— As

——————————— As a herd
Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd
Drove them before him thunder-ſtruck, purſu'd
With terrors and with furies to the bounds
And cryſtal wall of heav'n, which op'ning wide,
Rowl'd inward, and a ſpacious gap diſclos'd
Into the waſteful deep; the monſtrous ſight
Strook them with horror backward, but far worſe
Urg'd them behind; headlong themſelves they threw
Down from the verge of heav'n.

Milton, b. 6.

In the ſame view, Homer, I think, may be defended, in comparing the ſhouts of the Trojans in battle, to the noiſe of cranes *, and to the bleating of a flock of ſheep †: and it is no objection, that theſe are low images; for by oppoſing the noiſy march of the Trojans to the ſilent and manly march of the Greeks, he certainly intended to leſſen the former. Addiſon ‡, imagining the figure that men make in the ſight of a ſuperior being, takes opportunity to mor-

* Beginning of book 3. † Book 4. l. 498.
‡ Guardian No. 153.

tify

tify their pride by comparing them to a ſwarm of piſmires.

A compariſon that has none of the good effects mentioned in this diſcourſe, but is built upon common and trifling circumſtances, makes a mighty ſilly figure: "Non "ſum neſcius, grandia conſilia a multis "plerumque cauſis, ceu magna navigia a "plurimis remis, impelli *."

By this time I imagine the different purpoſes of compariſon, and the various impreſſions it makes on the mind, are ſufficiently illuſtrated by proper examples. This was an eaſy work. It is more difficult to lay down rules about the propriety or impropriety of compariſons; in what circumſtances they may be introduced, and in what circumſtances they are out of place. It is evident, that a compariſon is not proper upon every occaſion; a man in his cool and ſedate moments, is not diſpoſed to poetical flights, nor to ſacrifice truth and reality to the deluſive operations of the imagination; far leſs is he ſo diſpoſed, when oppreſſed with cares, or intereſted in ſome important tranſaction

* Strada de bello Belgico.

that occupies him totally. The region of compariſon and of all figurative expreſſion, lies betwixt theſe two extremes. It is obſervable, that a man, when elevated or animated by any paſſion, is diſpoſed to elevate or animate all his objects: he avoids familiar names, exalts objects by circumlocution and metaphor, and gives even life and voluntary action to inanimate beings. In this warmth of mind, the higheſt poetical flights are indulged, and the boldeſt ſimiles and metaphors reliſhed *. But without ſoaring ſo high, the mind is frequently in a tone to reliſh chaſte and moderate ornament; ſuch as compariſons that ſet the principal object in a ſtrong point of view, or that embelliſh and diverſify the narration. In general, when by any animating paſſion, whether pleaſant or painful, an impulſe is given to the imagination; we are in that condition wonderfully diſpoſed to every ſort of figurative expreſſion, and in particular to com-

* It is accordingly obſerved by Longinus, in his treatiſe of the Sublime, that the proper time for metaphor, is when the paſſions are ſo ſwelled as to hurry on like a torrent.

pariſons. This in a great meaſure is evident from the compariſons already mentioned; and ſhall be further illuſtrated by other examples. Love, for example, in its infancy, rouſing the imagination, prompts the heart to diſplay itſelf in figurative language, and in ſimiles:

Troilus. Tell me, Apollo, for thy Daphne's love,
What Creſſid is, what Pandar, and what we?
Her bed is India, there ſhe lies, a pearl:
Between our Ilium, and where ſhe reſides,
Let it be call'd the wild and wandering flood;
Ourſelf the merchant, and this ſailing Pandar
Our doubtful hope, our convoy, and our bark.
Troilus and Creſſida, act 1. *ſc.* 1.

Again,

Come, gentle Night; come, loving black-brow'd Night!
Give me my Romeo; and, when he ſhall die,
Take him, and cut him out in little ſtars,
And he will make the face of heav'n ſo fine,
That all the world ſhall be in love with Night
And pay no worſhip to the gariſh ſun.
Romeo and Juliet, act 3. *ſc.* 4.

The dread of a misfortune, however imminent, involving always ſome doubt and uncertainty, agitates the mind, and excites the imagination:

Wolſey. ——————— Nay, then, farewell;
I've touch'd the higheſt point of all my greatneſs.
And from that full meridian of my glory
I haſte now to my ſetting. I ſhall fall,
Like a bright exhalation in the evening,
And no man ſee me more.

Henry VIII. *act* 3. *ſc.* 4.

But it will be a better illuſtration of the preſent head, to give examples where compariſons are improperly introduced. I have had already occaſion to obſerve, that ſimiles are not the language of a man in his ordinary ſtate of mind, going about the common affairs of life. For that reaſon, the following ſpeech of a gardiner to his ſervants, is extremely improper.

Go bind thou up yon dangling apricocks
Which, like unruly children, make their ſire
Stoop with oppreſſion of their prodigal weight:
Give ſome ſupportance to the bending twigs.
Go thou, and like an executioner,

Cut

Cut off the heads of too-faſt-growing ſprays,
That look too lofty in our commonwealth:
All muſt be even in our government.

Richard II. *act* 3. *ſc.* 7.

The fertility of Shakeſpear's vein betrays him frequently into this error. There is the ſame impropriety in another ſimile of his:

Hero. Good Margaret, run thee into the parlour;
There ſhalt thou find my couſin Beatrice;
Whiſper her ear, and tell her, I and Urſula
Walk in the orchard, and our whole diſcourſe
Is all of her; ſay, that thou overheard'ſt us:
And bid her ſteal into the pleached bower,
Where honeyſuckles, ripen'd by the ſun,
Forbid the ſun to enter; like to favourites,
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
Againſt that power that bred it.

Much ado about nothing, *act* 3. *ſc.* 1.

Rooted grief, deep anguiſh, terror, remorſe, deſpair, and all the ſevere diſpiriting paſſions, are declared enemies, perhaps not to figurative language in general, but undoubtedly to the pomp and ſolemnity of compariſon.

Upon

Upon this account the ſimile pronounced by young Rutland under terror of death from an inveterate enemy, and praying mercy, is unnatural:

So looks the pent-up lion o'er the wretch
That trembles under his devouring paws;
And ſo he walks inſulting o'er his prey,
And ſo he comes to rend his limbs aſunder.
Ah, gentle Clifford, kill me with thy ſword,
And not with ſuch a cruel threat'ning look.

Third part Henry VI. *act* 1. *ſc.* 5.

Nothing appears more out of place, or more aukwardly introduced, than the following ſimile.

Lucia. ——— Farewell, my Portius,
Farewell, though death is in the word, *for-ever!*
Portius. Stay, Lucia, ſtay; what doſt thou ſay, *for-ever?*
Lucia. Have I not ſworn? If, Portius, thy ſucceſs
Muſt throw thy brother on his fate, farewell:
Oh, how ſhall I repeat the word *for-ever!*
Portius. Thus, o'er the dying lamp th' unſteady flame
Hangs quivering on a point, leaps off by fits,
And falls again, as loath to quit its hold.

——Thou

——Thou muſt not go, my ſoul ſtill hovers o'er thee,
And can't get looſe. *Cato, act 3. ſc. 2.*

Nor doth the ſimile which cloſes the firſt act of the ſame tragedy, make its appearance with a much better grace; the ſituation there repreſented, being too diſpiriting for a ſimile. A ſimile is improper for one who dreads the diſcovery of a ſecret machination.

Zara. The mute not yet return'd! Ha! 'twas the King,
The King that parted hence! frowning he went;
His eyes like meteors roll'd, then darted down
Their red and angry beams; as if his ſight
Would, like the raging Dog-ſtar, ſcorch the earth,
And kindle ruin in its courſe.
Mourning Bride, act 5. ſc. 3.

A man ſpent and diſpirited after loſing a battle, is not diſpoſed to heighten or illuſtrate his diſcourſe by ſimiles:

York. With this we charg'd again; but out! alas,
We bodg'd again; as I have ſeen a ſwan

With

With bootleſs labour ſwim againſt the tide,
And ſpend her ſtrength with over-matching waves.
Ah! hark, the fatal followers do purſue.
And I am faint and cannot fly their fury.
The ſands are number'd that make up my life;
Here muſt I ſtay, and here my life muſt end.
Third part Henry VI. *act* 1. *ſc.* 6.

Far leſs is a man diſpoſed to ſimiles who is not only defeated in a pitch'd battle, but lies at the point of death mortally wounded.

Warwick. ——— My mangled body ſhews,
My blood, my want of ſtrength, my ſick heart ſhews,
That I muſt yield my body to the earth,
And, by my fall, the conqueſt to my foe.
Thus yields the cedar to the ax's edge,
Whoſe arms gave ſhelter to the princely eagle;
Under whoſe ſhade the ramping lion ſlept,
Whoſe top-branch overpeer'd Jove's ſpreading tree,
And kept low ſhrubs from winter's pow'rful wind.
Third part Henry VI. *act* 5. *ſc.* 3.

Queen Katharine, deſerted by the King and in the deepeſt affliction upon her divorce, could not be diſpoſed to any ſallies of imagination: and for that reaſon, the following

lowing ſimile, however beautiful in the mouth of a ſpectator, is ſcarce proper in her own.

I am the moſt unhappy woman living,
Shipwreck'd upon a kingdom, where no pity,
No friends, no hope! no kindred weep for me!
Almoſt no grave allowed me! like the lily,
That once was miſtreſs of the field, and flouriſh'd,
I'll hang my head and periſh.

King Henry VIII. *act* 3. *ſc.* 1.

Similes thus unſeaſonably introduced, are finely ridiculed in the *Rehearſal:*

Bayes. Now here ſhe muſt make a ſimile.

Smith. Where's the neceſſity of that, Mr Bayes?

Bayes. Becauſe ſhe's ſurpris'd; that's a general rule; you muſt ever make a ſimile when you are ſurpriſed; 'tis a new way of writing.

A compariſon is not always faultleſs, even where it is properly introduced. I have endeavoured above to give a general view of the different ends to which a compariſon may contribute. A compariſon, like other human productions, may fall ſhort of its end; and of this defect inſtances are not

rare even among good writers. To complete the preſent ſubject, it will be neceſſary to make ſome obſervations upon ſuch faulty compariſons. I begin with obſerving, that nothing can be more erroneous than to inſtitute a compariſon too faint: a diſtant reſemblance or contraſt, fatigues the mind with its obſcurity inſtead of amuſing it, and tends not to fulfil any one end of a compariſon. The following ſimiles ſeem to labour under this defect:

Albus ut obſcuro deterget nubila cœlo
Sæpe Notus, neque parturit imbres
Perpetuos: ſic tu ſapiens finire memento
Triſtitiam vitæque labores
Molli, Plance, mero.

Horace, Carm. l. 1. ode 7.

——— Medio dux agmine Turnus
Vertitur arma tenens, et toto vertice ſupra eſt.
Ceu ſeptem ſurgens ſedatis amnibus altus
Per tacitum Ganges: aut pingui flumine Nilus
Cum refluit campis, et jam ſe condidit alveo.

Æneid ix. 28.

Talibus orabat, taleſque miſerrima fletus
Fertque refertque ſoror: ſed nullus ille movetur
Fletibus,

Fletibus, aut voces ullas tractabilis audit.
Fata obstant: placidasque viri Deus obstruit aures.
Ac veluti annoso validam cum robore quercum
Alpini Boreæ, nunc hinc, nunc flatibus illinc
Eruere inter se certant; it stridor; et alte
Consternunt terram concusso stipite frondes:
Ipsa hæret scopulis: et quantum vertice ad auras
Æthereas, tantum radice in tartara tendit.
Haud secus assiduis hinc atque hinc vocibus heros
Tunditur, et magno persentit pectore curas:
Mens immota manet, lacrymæ volvuntur inanes.

Æneid iv. 437.

K. Rich. Give me the crown.—Here, cousin, seize the crown,
Here, on this side, my hand; on that side, thine.
Now is this golden crown like a deep well,
That owes two buckets, filling one another;
The emptier ever dancing in the air,
The other down, unseen and full of water;
That bucket down, and full of tears, am I;
Drinking my griefs, whilst you mount up on high.

Richard II. *act* 4. *sc.* 3.

King John. Oh! Cousin, thou art come to set mine eye;
The tackle of my heart is crack'd and burnt;

And all the ſhrowds wherewith my life ſhould
fail,
Are turned to one thread, one little hair:
My heart hath one poor ſtring to ſtay it by,
Which holds but till thy news be uttered.
King John, act 5. *ſc.* 10.

York. My uncles both are ſlain in reſcuing me:
And all my followers, to the eager foe
Turn back, and fly like ſhips before the wind,
Or lambs purſu'd by hunger-ſtarved wolves.
Third Part Henry VI. *act* 1. *ſc.* 6.

The latter of the two ſimiles is good. The former, becauſe of the faintneſs of the reſemblance, produces no good effect, and crowds the narration with an uſeleſs image.

The next error I ſhall mention is a capital one. In an epic poem, or in any elevated ſubject, a writer ought to avoid raiſing a ſimile upon a low image, which never fails to bring down the principal ſubject. In general, it is a rule, that a grand object ought never to be reſembled to one that is diminutive, however delicate the reſemblance may be. It is the peculiar character of

of a grand object to fix the attention, and ſwell the mind: in this ſtate, it is diſagreeable to contract the mind to a minute object, however elegant. The reſembling an object to one that is greater, has, on the contrary, a good effect, by raiſing or ſwelling the mind. One paſſes with ſatisfaction from a ſmall to a great object; but cannot be drawn down, without reluctance, from great to ſmall. Hence the following ſimiles are faulty.

Meanwhile the troops beneath Patroculus' care,
Invade the Trojans, and commence the war.
As waſps, provok'd by children in their play,
Pour from their manſions by the broad high-way,
In ſwarms the guiltleſs traveller engage,
Whet all their ſtings, and call forth all their rage;
All riſe in arms, and with a general cry
Aſſert their waxen domes, and buzzing progeny:
Thus from the tents the fervent legion ſwarms,
So loud their clamours, and ſo keen their arms.

Iliad xvi. 312.

So burns the vengeful hornet (foul all o'er)
Repuls'd in vain, and thirſty ſtill of gore;
(Bold ſon of air and heat) on angry wings
Untam'd, untir'd, he turns, attacks and ſtings.

Fir'd

Fir'd with like ardour fierce Atrides flew,
And ſent his ſoul with ev'ry lance he threw.
Iliad xvii. 642.

Inſtant ardentes Tyrii: pars ducere muros,
Molirique arcem, et manibus ſubvolvere ſaxa;
Pars aptare locum tecto, et concludere ſulco.
Jura magiſtratuſque legunt, ſanctumque ſenatum.
Hic portus alii effodiunt: hic alta theatris
Fundamenta locant alii, immaneſque columnas
Rupibus excidunt, ſcenis decora alta futuris.
Qualis apes æſtate nova per florea rura
Exercet ſub ſole labor, cum gentis adultos
Educunt fœtus, aut cum liquentia mella
Stipant et dulci diſtendunt nectare cellas,
Aut onera accipiunt venientum, aut agmine facto
Ignavum fucos pecus a præſepibus arcent.
Fervet opus, redolentque thymo fragrantia mella.
Æneid i. 427.

To deſcribe bees gathering honey as reſembling the builders of Carthage, would have a much better effect.

Tum vero Teucri incumbunt, et littore celſas
Deducunt toto naves: natat uncta carina;
Frondenteſque ferunt remos, et robora ſylvis
Infabricata, fugæ ſtudio.
Migrantes cernas, totaque ex urbe ruentes.

Ac

Ac veluti ingentem formicæ farris acervum
Cum populant, hyemis memores, tectoque reponunt:
It nigrum campis agmen, prædamque per herbas
Convectant calle angusto: pars grandia trudunt
Obnixæ frumenta humeris: pars agmina cogunt,
Castigantque moras: opere omnis semita fervet.
Æneid. iv. 397.

The following simile has not any one beauty to recommend it. The subject is Amata the wife of King Latinus.

Tum vero infelix, ingentibus excita monstris,
Immensam sine more furit lymphata per urbem:
Ceu quondam torto volitans sub verbere turbo,
Quem pueri magno in gyro vacua atria circum
Intenti ludo exercent. Ille actus habena
Curvatis fertur spatiis: stupet inscia turba,
Impubesque manus, mirata volubile buxum:
Dant animos plagæ. Non cursu segnior illo
Per medias urbes agitur, populosque feroces.
Æneid. vii. 376.

This simile seems to border upon the burlesque.

An error opposite to the former, is the introducing a resembling image, so elevated or

or great as to bear no proportion to the principal ſubject. The remarkable diſparity betwixt them, being the moſt ſtriking circumſtance, ſeizes the mind, and never fails to depreſs the principal ſubject by contraſt, inſtead of raiſing it by reſemblance: and if the diſparity be exceeding great, the ſimile takes on an air of burleſque; nothing being more ridiculous than to force an object out of its proper rank in nature, by equalling it with one greatly ſuperior or greatly inferior. This will be evident from the following compariſons.

Fervet opus, redolentque thymo fragrantia mella,
Ac veluti lentis Cyclopes fulmina maſſis
Cum properant: alii taurinis follibus auras
Accipiunt, redduntque: alii ſtridentia tingunt
Æra lacu: gemit impoſitis incudibus Ætna:
Illi inter ſeſe magna vi brachia tollunt
In numerum; verſantque tenaci forcipe ferrum.
Non aliter (ſi parva licet componere magnis)
Cecropias innatus apes amor urget habendi,
Munere quamque ſuo. Grandævis oppida curæ,
Et munire favos, et Dædala fingere tecta.
At feſſæ multâ referunt ſe nocte minores,
Crura thymo plenæ: paſcuntur et arbuta paſſim,

Et

Et glaucas ſalices, caſiamque crocumque rubentem,
Et pinguem tiliam, et ferrugineos hyacinthos.
Omnibus una quies operum, labor omnibus unus.
Georgic. iv. 169.

Tum Bitian ardentem oculis animiſque frementem;
Non jaculo, neque enim jaculo vitam ille dediſſet;
Sed magnum ſtridens contorta falarica venit
Fulminis acta modo, quam nec duo taurea terga,
Nec duplici ſquama lorica fidelis et auro
Suſtinuit: collapſa ruunt immania membra:
Dat tellus gemitum, et clypeum ſuper intonat ingens.
Qualis in Euboico Baiarum littore quondam
Saxea pila cadit, magnis quam molibus ante
Conſtructam jaciunt ponto: ſic illa ruinam
Prona trahit, penituſque vadis illiſa recumbit:
Miſcent ſe maria, et nigræ attolluntur arenæ:
Tum ſonitu Prochyta alta tremit, durumque cubile
Inarime Jovis imperiis impoſita Typhoëo.
Æneid. ix. 703.

Loud as a bull makes hill and valley ring,
So roar'd the lock when it releas'd the ſpring.
Odyſſey xxi. 51.

Such a ſimile upon the ſimpleſt of all actions, that of opening a lock, is pure burleſque.

A writer of delicacy will avoid drawing his compariſons from any image that is nauſeous, ugly, or remarkably diſagreeable: for however ſtrong the reſemblance may be, more will be loſt than gained by ſuch compariſon. Therefore I cannot help condemning, though with ſome reluctance, the following ſimile, or rather metaphor.

O thou fond many! with what loud applauſe
Did'ſt thou beat heav'n with bleſſing Bolingbroke
Before he was what thou wou'dſt have him be?
And now being trimm'd up in thine own deſires,
Thou, beaſtly feeder, art ſo full of him,
That thou provok'ſt thyſelf to caſt him up.
And ſo, thou common dog, didſt thou diſgorge
Thy glutton boſom of the royal Richard,
And now thou wou'dſt eat thy dead vomit up,
And howl'ſt to find it.

Second Part Henry IV. *act* 1. *ſc.* 6.

The ſtrongeſt objection that can lie againſt a compariſon, is, that it conſiſts in words only, not in ſenſe. Such falſe coin, or baſtard wit, does extremely well in burleſque; but is far below the dignity of the epic, or of any ſerious compoſition:

The

The noble ſiſter of Poplicola,
The moon of Rome; chaſte as the iſicle
That's curdled by the froſt from pureſt ſnow,
And hangs on Dian's temple.

Coriolanus, act 5. ſc. 3.

There is evidently no reſemblance betwixt an iſicle and a woman, chaſte or unchaſte. But chaſtity is cold in a metaphorical ſenſe, and an iſicle is cold in a proper ſenſe; and this verbal reſemblance, in the hurry and glow of compoſing, has been thought a ſufficient foundation for the ſimile. Such phantom ſimiles are mere witticiſms, which ought to have no quarter, except where purpoſely introduced to provoke laughter. Lucian, in his diſſertation upon hiſtory, talking of a certain author, makes the following compariſon, which is verbal merely.

This author's deſcriptions are ſo cold, that they ſurpaſs the Caſpian ſnow, and all the ice of the north.

Virgil has not eſcaped this puerility:

——— Galathæa thymo mihi dulcior Hyblæ.
Bucol. vii. 37.

——— Ego Sardois videar tibi amarior herbis.
Ibid. 41.

Gallo, cujus amor tantum mihi creſcit in horas,
Quantum vere novo viridis ſe ſubjicit alnus.
Buccol. x. 73.

Nor Taſſo, in his Aminta:

Picciola e' l' ape, e fa col picciol morſo
Pur gravi, e pur moleſte le ferite;
Ma, qual coſa é più picciola d' amore,
Se in ogni breve ſpatio entra, e s' aſconde
In ogni breve ſpatio? hor, ſotto a l'ombra
De le palpebre, hor trà minuti rivi
D'un biondo crine, hor dentro le pozzette,
Che forma un dolce riſo in bella guancia;
E pur fá tanto grandi, e ſi mortali,
E coſi immedicabili le piaghe.
Att 2. *ſc.* 1.

Nor Boileau, the chaſteſt of all writers; and that even in his art of poetry:

Ainſi

Ainſi tel autrefois, qu'on vit avec Faret
Charbonner de ſes vers les murs d'un cabaret,
S'en va mal a' propos, d'une voix inſolente,
Chanter du peuple Hebreu la fuite triomphante,
Et pourſuivant Moiſe au travers des déſerts,
Court avec Pharaon ſe noyer dans les mers.
Chant. 1. *l.* 21.

——— But for their ſpirits and ſouls
This word *rebellion* had froze them up
As fiſh are in a pond.
Second Part Henry IV. *act* 1. *ſc.* 3.

Queen. The pretty vaulting ſea refus'd to drown me;
Knowing, that thou wou'dſt have me drown'd on ſhore
With tears as ſalt as ſea, through thy unkindneſs.
Second Part Henry VI. *act* 3. *ſc.* 6.

Here there is no manner of reſemblance but in the word *drown*; for there is no real reſemblance betwixt being drown'd at ſea, and dying of grief at land. But perhaps this ſort of tinſel wit, may have a propriety in it, when uſed to expreſs an affected, not a real, paſſion, which was the Queen's caſe.

Pope

Pope has ſeveral ſimiles of the ſame ſtamp. I ſhall tranſcribe one or two from the *Eſſay on Man*, the graveſt and moſt inſtructive of all his performances.

And hence one maſter-paſſion in the breaſt,
Like Aaron's ſerpent, ſwallows up the reſt.
Epiſt. 2. *l.* 131.

And again, talking of this ſame ruling or maſter paſſion.

Nature its mother, Habit is its nurſe;
Wit, ſpirit, faculties, but make it worſe;
Reaſon itſelf but gives it edge and pow'r;
As heav'n's bleſt beam turns vinegar more ſowr.
Ibid. l. 145.

Lord Bolingbroke, ſpeaking of hiſtorians:

Where their ſincerity as to fact is doubtful, we ſtrike out truth by the confrontation of different accounts; as we ſtrike out ſparks of fire by the colliſion of flints and ſteel.

Let us vary the phraſe a very little, and there will not remain a ſhadow of reſemblance. Thus, for example:

We diſcover truth by the confrontation of different

ent accounts; as we ſtrike out ſparks of fire by the colliſion of flints and ſteel.

Racine makes Pyrrhus ſay to Andromaque,

Vaincu, chargé de fers, de regrets conſumé,
Brulé de plus de feux que je n'en allumai,
Helas! fus-je jamais ſi cruel que vous l'etés?

And Oreſtes, in the ſame ſtrain:

Que les Scythes ſont moins cruels qu' Hermione.

Similes of this kind put one in mind of a ludicrous French ſong:

Je croyois Janneton
Auſſi douce que belle:
Je croyois Janneton
Plus douce qu'un mouton;
Helas! helas!
Elle eſt cent fois, mille fois, plus cruelle
Que n'eſt le tigre aux bois.

Again,

Helas! l'amour m'a pris,
Comme le chat fait la ſouris.

A vulgar Iriſh ballad begins thus:

I have as much love in ſtore
As there's apples in Portmore.

Where the ſubject is burleſque or ludicrous, ſuch ſimiles are far from being improper. Horace ſays pleaſantly,

Quanquam tu levior cortice.

L. 3. *ode* 9.

And Shakeſpear,

In breaking oaths he's ſtronger than Hercules.

And this leads me to obſerve, that beſide the foregoing compariſons, which are all ſerious, there is a ſpecies, the end and purpoſe of which is to excite gaiety or mirth. Take the following examples.

Falſtaff, ſpeaking to his page:

I do here walk before thee, like a ſow that hath overwhelmed all her litter but one.

Second Part Henry IV. *act* 1. *ſc.* 4.

I think he is not a pick-purſe, nor a horſe-ſtealer; but for his verity in love, I do think him as concave

concave as a cover'd goblet, or a worm-eaten nut.

As you like it, act 3. ſc. 10.

This ſword a dagger had his page,
That was but little for his age;
And therefore waited on him ſo
As dwarfs upon knights-errant do.

Hudibras, canto 1.

Deſcription of Hudibras's horſe:

He was well ſtay'd, and in his gait
Preſerv'd a grave, majeſtic ſtate.
At ſpur or ſwitch no more he ſkipt,
Or mended pace, than Spaniard whipt:
And yet ſo fiery he would bound,
As if he griev'd to touch the ground:
That Cæſar's horſe, who, as fame goes,
Had corns upon his feet and toes,
Was not by half ſo tender hooft,
Nor trod upon the ground ſo ſoft.
And as that beaſt would kneel and ſtoop,
(Some write) to take his rider up;
So Hudibras his ('tis well known)
Would often do, to ſet him down.

Canto 1.

Honour is, like a widow, won
With briſk attempt and putting on,

With entering manfully, and urging;
Not ſlow approaches, like a virgin.

Canto 1.

The ſun had long ſince in the lap
Of Thetis taken out his nap;
And, like a lobſter boil'd, the morn
From black to red began to turn.

Part 2. *canto* 2.

Books, like men, their authors, have but one way of coming into the world; but there are ten thouſand to go out of it, and return no more.

Tale of a Tub.

And in this the world may perceive the difference between the integrity of a generous author, and that of a common friend. The latter is obſerved to adhere cloſe in proſperity, but on the decline of fortune, to drop ſuddenly off: whereas the generous author, juſt on the contrary, finds his hero on the dunghill, from thence by gradual ſteps raiſes him to a throne, and then immediately withdraws, expecting not ſo much as thanks for his pains.

Tale of a Tub.

The moſt accompliſh'd way of uſing books at preſent is, to ſerve them as ſome do lords, learn their

their *titles*, and then brag of their acquaintance.

Tale of a Tub.

Box'd in a chair, the beau impatient ſits,
While ſpouts run clatt'ring o'er the roof by fits;
And ever and anon with frightful din
The leather ſounds; he trembles from within.
So when Troy chairmen bore the wooden ſteed,
Pregnant with Greeks, impatient to be freed,
(Thoſe bully Greeks, who, as the moderns do,
Inſtead of paying chairmen, run them through),
Laocoon ſtruck the outſide with his ſpear,
And each impriſon'd hero quak'd for fear.

Deſcription of a city ſhower. Swift.

Clubs, diamonds, hearts, in wild diſorder ſeen,
With throngs promiſcuous ſtrow the level green.
Thus when diſpers'd a routed army runs,
Of Aſia's troops, and Afric's ſable ſons,
With like confuſion different nations fly,
Of various habit, and of various dye,
The pierc'd battalions diſunited, fall
In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them all.

Rape of the Lock, canto 3.

He does not conſider, that ſincerity in love is as much out of faſhion as ſweet ſnuff; no body takes it now.

Careleſs Huſband.

Lady Eaſy. My dear, I am afraid you have provoked her a little too far.

Sir Charles. O! Not at all. You ſhall ſee, I'll ſweeten her, and ſhe'll cool like a diſh of tea.

Ibid.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

FIGURES.

THE reader muſt not expect to find here a complete liſt of the different tropes and figures that have been carefully noted by ancient critics and grammarians. Tropes and figures have indeed been multiplied with ſo little reſerve, as to make it no eaſy matter to diſtinguiſh them from plain language. A diſcovery almoſt accidental, made me think of giving them a place in this work: I found that the moſt important of them depend on principles formerly explained; and I was glad of an opportunity to ſhow the extenſive influence of theſe principles. Confining myſelf therefore to figures that anſwer this purpoſe, I am luckily freed from much traſh; without dropping, ſo far as I remember, any figure that merits a proper name.

name. And I begin with Proſopopœia or perſonification, which is juſty intitled to the firſt place.

SECT. I.

PERSONIFICATION.

THis figure, which gives life to things inanimate, is ſo bold a deluſion as to require, one ſhould imagine, very peculiar circumſtances for operating the effect. And yet, in the language of poetry, we find variety of expreſſions, which, though commonly reduced to this figure, are uſed without ceremony or any ſort of preparation. I give, for example, the following expreſſions. *Thirſty* ground, *hungry* church-yard, *furious* dart, *angry* ocean. The epithets here, in their proper meaning, are attributes of ſenſible beings. What is the effect of ſuch epithets, when apply'd to things inanimate? Do they raiſe in the mind of the reader a perception of ſenſibility? Do they make

make him conceive the ground, the church-yard, the dart, the ocean, to be endued with animal functions? This is a curious inquiry; and whether ſo or not, it cannot be declined in handling the preſent ſubject.

One thing is certain, that the mind is prone to beſtow ſenſibility upon things inanimate, where that violent effect is neceſſary to gratify paſſion. This is one inſtance, among many, of the power of paſſion to adjuſt our opinions and belief to its gratification *. I give the following examples. Antony, mourning over the body of Cæſar, murdered in the ſenate-houſe, vents his paſſion in the following words.

Antony. O pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,
That I am meek and gentle with theſe butchers.
Thou art the ruins of the nobleſt man
That ever lived in the tide of times.

Julius Cæſar, act 3. *ſc.* 4.

Here Antony muſt have been impreſſed with ſome ſort of notion, that the body of

* Chap. 2. part 5.

Cæſar

Cæſar was liſtening to him, without which the ſpeech would be fooliſh and abſurd. Nor will it appear ſtrange, after what is ſaid in the chapter above cited, that paſſion ſhould have ſuch power over the mind of man. Another example of the ſame kind is, where the earth, as a common mother, is animated to give refuge againſt a father's unkindneſs.

Almeria. O Earth, behold, I kneel upon thy boſom,
And bend my flowing eyes to ſtream upon
Thy face, imploring thee that thou wilt yield;
Open thy bowels of compaſſion, take
Into thy womb the laſt and moſt forlorn
Of all thy race. Hear me thou, common parent;
——I have no parent elſe.—— Be thou a mother,
And ſtep between me and the curſe of him,
Who was —who was, but is no more a father;
But brands my innocence with horrid crimes;
And for the tender names of *child* and *daughter*,
Now calls me *murderer* and *parricide*.

Mourning Bride, act. 4. *ſc.* 7.

Plaintive paſſions are extremely ſolicitous for vent. A ſoliloquy commonly anſwers the

the purpoſe. But when a paſſion ſwells high, it is not ſatisfied with ſo ſlight a gratification: it muſt have a perſon to complain to; and if none be found, it will animate things devoid of ſenſe. Thus Philoctetes complains to the rocks and promontories of the iſle of Lemnos *; and Alceſtes dying, invokes the ſun, the light of day, the clouds, the earth, her huſband's palace, &c. †. Plaintive paſſions carry the mind ſtill farther. Among the many principles that connect individuals in ſociety, one is remarkable: it is that principle which makes us earneſtly wiſh, that others ſhould enter into our concerns and think and feel as we do ‡. This ſocial principle, when inflamed by a plaintive paſſion, will, for want of a more complete gratification, prompt the mind to give life even to things inanimate. Moſchus, lamenting the death of Bion, conceives that the birds, the fountains, the trees, lament with him. The ſhepherd,

* Philoctetes of Sophocles, act 4. ſc. 2.

† Alceſtes of Euripides, act 2. ſc. 1.

‡ See this principle accounted for, chap. 25.

who in Virgil bewails the death of Daphnis, expreſſeth himſelf thus:

Daphni, tuum Pœnos etiam ingemuiſſe leones
Interitum, monteſque feri ſylvæque loquuntur.
Eclogue v. 27.

Again,

Illum etiam lauri, illum etiam flevere myricæ.
Pinifer illum etiam ſola ſub rupe jacentem
Mœnalus, et gelidi fleverunt ſaxa Lycæi.
Eclogue x. 13.

Again,

Ho viſto al pianto mio
Reſponder per pietate i faſſi e l' onde;
E ſoſpirar le fronde
Ho viſto al pianto mio.
Ma non ho viſto mai,
Ne ſpero di vedere
Compaſſion ne la crudele, e bella.
Aminta di Taſſo, act 1. *ſc.* 2.

Earl Rivers carried to execution, ſays,

O Pomfret, Pomfret! O thou bloody priſon,
Fatal and ominous to Noble peers!
Within the guilty cloſure of thy walls
Richard the Second, here, was hack'd to death;
And,

And, for more ſlander to thy diſmal ſeat,
We give to thee our guiltleſs blood to drink.
Richard III. *act* 3. *ſc.* 4.

King Richard having got intelligence of Bolingbroke's invaſion, ſays, upon his landing in England from his Iriſh expedition, in a mixture of joy and reſentment,

——————— I weep for joy
To ſtand upon my kingdom once again.
Dear earth, I do ſalute thee with my hand,
Though rebels wound thee with their horſes hoofs.
As a long parted mother with her child
Plays fondly with her tears, and ſmiles in meeting;
So weeping, ſmiling, greet I thee my earth,
And do thee favour with my royal hands.
Feed not thy ſovereign's foe, my gentle earth,
Nor with thy ſweets comfort his rav'nous ſenſe:
But let thy ſpiders that ſuck up thy venom,
And heavy-gaited toads, lie in their way;
Doing annoyance to the treach'rous feet,
Which with uſurping ſteps do trample thee.
Yield ſtinging nettles to mine enemies;
And, when they from thy boſom pluck a flower,
Guard it, I pr'ythee, with a lurking adder;
Whoſe double tongue may with a mortal touch

Throw death upon thy ſovereign's enemies.
Mock not my ſenſeleſs conjuration, Lords:
This earth ſhall have a feeling; and theſe ſtones
Prove armed ſoldiers, ere her native king
Shall faulter under foul rebellious arms.

Richard II. *act* 3. *ſc.* 2.

Among the ancients, it was cuſtomary after a long voyage to ſalute the natal ſoil. A long voyage, was of old a greater enterpriſe than at preſent: the ſafe return to one's country after much fatigue and danger, was a circumſtance extremely delightful; and it was natural to give the natal ſoil a temporary life, in order to ſympathiſe with the traveller. See an example, *Agamemnon* of Æſchilus, act 3. in the beginning. Regret for leaving a place one has been accuſtomed to, has the ſame effect *.

Terror produceth the ſame effect. A man, to gratify this paſſion, extends it to every thing around, even to things inanimate:

Speaking of Polyphemus,

Clamorem immenſum tollit, quo pontus et omnes

* Philoctetes of Sophocles, at the cloſe.

Intremuere

Intremuere undæ penituſque exterrita tellus
Italiæ. *Æneid.* iii. 672.

——————— As when old Ocean roars,
And heaves huge ſurges to the *trembling* ſhores.
Iliad ii. 249.

And thund'ring footſteps *ſhake* the ſounding ſhore.
Iliad ii. 549.

Then with a voice that *ſhook* the vaulted ſkies.
Iliad v. 431.

Racine, in the tragedy of *Phedra*, deſcribing the ſea-monſter that deſtroy'd Hippolitus, conceives the ſea itſelf to be inſpired with terror as well as the ſpectators; or more accurately transfers from the ſpectators their terror to the ſea, with which they were connected:

Le flot qui l' apporta recule epouvanté.

A man alſo naturally communicates his joy to all objects around, animate or inanimate:

——————— As when to them who ſail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are paſt
Mozambic,

Mozambic, off at ſea north-eaſt winds blow
Sabean odour from the ſpicy ſhore
Of Araby the Bleſt; with ſuch delay
Well pleas'd, they ſlack their courſe, and many a league
Chear'd with the grateful ſmell old Ocean ſmiles.
Paradiſe Loſt, *b.* 4.

I have been profuſe of examples, to ſhow what power many paſſions have to animate their objects. In all the foregoing examples, the perſonification, if I miſtake not, is ſo complete as to be derived from an actual conviction, momentary indeed, of life and intelligence. But it is evident from numberleſs inſtances, that perſonification is not always ſo complete. Perſonification is a common figure in deſcriptive poetry, underſtood to be the language of the writer, and not of any of his perſonages in a fit of paſſion. In this caſe, it ſeldom or never comes up to a conviction, even momentary, of life and intelligence. I give the following examples.

Firſt in *his* eaſt the glorious lamp was ſeen,
Regent of day, and all th' horizon round
Inveſted

Inveſted with bright rays; jocund to run
His longitude through heav'n's high road: the gray
Dawn, and the Pleiades before *him* danc'd,
Shedding ſweet influence. Leſs bright the moon
But oppoſite, in levell'd weſt was ſet
His mirror, with full face borrowing *her* light
From *him*; for other light *ſhe* needed none.
Paradiſe Loſt, b. 7. l. 370. *

Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the miſty mountain-tops.
Romeo and Juliet, act 3. ſc. 7.

But look, the morn, in ruſſet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eaſtward hill.
Hamlet, act 1. ſc. 1.

It may, I preſume, be taken for granted, that, in the foregoing inſtances, the perſonification, either with the poet or his reader, amounts not to a conviction of intelligence; nor that the ſun, the moon, the

* The chaſtity of the Engliſh language, which in common uſage diſtinguiſhes by genders no words but what ſignify beings male and female, gives thus a fine opportunity for the proſopopœia; a beauty unknown in other languages, where every word is maſculine or feminine.

day,

day, the morn, are here underſtood to be ſenſible beings. What then is the nature of this perſonification? Upon conſidering the matter attentively, I diſcover that this ſpecies of perſonification muſt be referred to the imagination. The inanimate object is imagined to be a ſenſible being, but without any conviction, even for a moment, that it really is ſo. Ideas or fictions of imagination have power to raiſe emotions in the mind *; and when any thing inanimate is, in imagination, ſuppoſed to be a ſenſible being, it makes by that means a greater figure than when an idea is formed of it according to truth. The elevation however in this caſe, is far from being ſo great as when the perſonification ariſes to an actual conviction; and therefore muſt be conſidered as of a lower or inferior ſort. Thus perſonification is of two kinds. The firſt or nobler, may be termed *paſſionate perſonification:* the other, or more humble, *deſcriptive perſonification*; becauſe ſeldom or

* See appendix, containing definitions and explanation of terms.

never

never is perſonification in a deſcription carried the length of conviction.

The imagination is ſo lively and active, that its images are raiſed with very little effort; and this juſtifies the frequent uſe of deſcriptive perſonification. This figure abounds in Milton's *Allegro* and *Penſeroſo*.

Abſtract and general terms, as well as particular objects, are often neceſſary in poetry. Such terms however are not well adapted to poetry, becauſe they ſuggeſt not any image to the mind: I can readily form an image of Alexander or Achilles in wrath; but I cannot form an image of wrath in the abſtract, or of wrath independent of a perſon. Upon that account, in works addreſſed to the imagination, abſtract terms are frequently perſonified. But this perſonification never goes farther than the imagination.

Sed mihi vel Tellus optem prius ima dehiſcat;
Vel pater omnipotens adigat me fulmine ad umbras,
Pallentes umbras Erebi, noctemque profundam,
Ante pudor quam te violo, aut tua jura reſolvo.
Æneid. 4. *l.* 24.

Thus, to explain the effects of ſlander, it is imagined to be a voluntary agent:

——————— No, 'tis Slander;
Whoſe edge is ſharper than the ſword; whoſe tongue
Out-venoms all the worms of Nile; whoſe breath
Rides on the poſting winds, and doth belie
All corners of the world, kings, queens, and ſtates,
Maids, matrons: nay, the ſecrets of the grave
This viperous ſlander enters.

Shakeſpear, Cymbeline, act 3. *ſc.* 4.

As alſo human paſſions. Take the following example.

——————— For Pleaſure and Revenge
Have ears more deaf than adders, to the voice
Of any true deciſion.

Troilus and Creſſida, act 2. *ſc.* 4.

Virgil explains fame and its effects by a ſtill greater variety of action *. And Shakeſpear perſonifies death and its operations in a manner extremely fanciful:

* Æneid. iv. 173.

——— Within

——————— Within the hollow crown
That rounds the mortal temples of a king,
Keeps Death his court; and there the antic ſits,
Scoffing his ſtate, and grinning at his pomp;
Allowing him a breath, a little ſcene
To monarchize, be fear'd, and kill with looks;
Infuſing him with ſelf and vain conceit,
As if his fleſh, which walls about our life,
Were braſs impregnable; and humour'd thus,
Comes at the laſt, and with a little pin
Bores through his caſtle-walls, and farewell king!
Richard II. *act* 3. *ſc.* 4.

Not leſs ſucceſsfully is life and action given even to ſleep:

K. Henry. How many thouſands of my pooreſt
ſubjects
Are at this hour aſleep! O gentle Sleep,
Nature's ſoft nurſe, how have I frighted thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh my eye-lids down,
And ſteep my ſenſes in forgetfulneſs?
Why rather, Sleep, ly'ſt thou in ſmoky cribs,
Upon uneaſy pallets ſtretching thee,
And huſh'd with buzzing night-flies to thy ſlumber;
Than in the perfum'd chambers of the great,
Under the canopies of coſtly ſtate,

And lull'd with ſounds of ſweeteſt melody?
O thou dull god, why ly'ſt thou with the vile
In loathſome beds, and leav'ſt the kingly couch,
A watch-caſe to a common larum-bell?
Wilt thou, upon the high and giddy maſt,
Seal up the ſhip-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
In cradle of the rude imperious ſurge;
And in the viſitation of the winds,
Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
Curling their monſtrous heads, and hanging them
With deaf'ning clamours in the ſlipp'ry ſhrouds,
That, with the hurly, Death itſelf awakes:
Can'ſt thou, O partial Sleep, give thy repoſe
To the wet ſea-boy in an hour ſo rude;
And, in the calmeſt and the ſtilleſt night,
With all appliances and means to boot,
Deny it to a king? Then, happy low! lie down;
Uneaſy lies the head that wears a crown.

Second Part Henry IV. *act* 3. *ſc.* 1.

I ſhall add one example more, to ſhow that deſcriptive perſonification may be uſed with propriety, even where the purpoſe of the diſcourſe is inſtruction merely:

Oh! let the ſteps of youth be cautious,
How they advance into a dangerous world;
Our duty only can conduct us ſafe:

Our

Our paſſions are ſeducers: but of all,
The ſtrongeſt Love: he firſt approaches us,
In childiſh play, wantoning in our walks:
If heedleſsly we wander after him,
As he will pick out all the dancing way,
We're loſt, and hardly to return again.
We ſhould take warning: he is painted blind,
To ſhow us, if we fondly follow him,
The precipices we may fall into.
Therefore let Virtue take him by the hand:
Directed ſo, he leads to certain joy.

Southern.

Hitherto our progreſs has been upon firm ground. Whether we ſhall be ſo lucky in the remaining part of the journey, ſeems doubtful. For after acquiring ſome knowledge of the ſubject, when we now look back to the expreſſions mentioned in the beginning, *thirſty* ground, *furious* dart, and ſuch like, it ſeems as difficult as at firſt to ſay what ſort of perſonification it is. Such expreſſions evidently raiſe not the ſlighteſt conviction of ſenſibility. Nor do I think they amount to deſcriptive perſonification: in the expreſſions mentioned, we do not ſo much as figure the ground or the dart

dart to be animated; and if ſo, they cannot at all come under the preſent ſubject. And to ſhow this more clearly, I ſhall endeavour to explain what effect ſuch expreſſions have naturally upon the mind. In the expreſſion *angry ocean*, for example, do we not tacitly compare the ocean in a ſtorm, to a man in wrath? It is by this tacit compariſon, that the expreſſion acquires a force or elevation, beyond what is found when an epithet is uſed proper to the object: for I have had occaſion to ſhow *, that a thing inanimate acquires a certain elevation by being compared to a ſenſible being. And this very compariſon is itſelf a demonſtration, that there is no perſonification in ſuch expreſſions. For, by the very nature of a compariſon, the things compared are kept diſtinct, and the native appearance of each is preſerved. It will be ſhown afterward, that expreſſions of this kind belong to another figure, which I term *a figure of ſpeech*, and which employs the ſeventh ſection of the preſent chapter.

* Chap. 19.

Though

Though thus in general we can preciſely diſtinguiſh deſcriptive perſonification from what is merely a figure of ſpeech, it is however often difficult to ſay, with reſpect to ſome expreſſions, whether they are of the one kind or of the other. Take the following inſtances.

The moon ſhines bright: in ſuch a night as this,
When the ſweet wind did gently *kiſs* the trees,
And they did make no noiſe; in ſuch a night,
Troilus methinks mounted the Trojan wall,
And ſigh'd his ſoul towards the Grecian tents
Where Creſſid lay that night.

Merchant of Venice, act 5. ſc. 1.

——————— I have ſeen
Th' *ambitious* ocean ſwell, and rage, and foam,
To be exalted with the threat'ning clouds.

Julius Cæſar, act 1. ſc. 6.

Jane Shore. My form, alas! has long forgot to pleaſe;
The ſcene of beauty and delight is chang'd,
No roſes bloom upon my fading cheek,
No laughing graces wanton in my eyes;
But haggard Grief, lean-looking ſallow Care,

And

And pining Diſcontent, a rueful train,
Dwell on my brow, all hideous and forlorn.
Jane Shore, act 1. *ſc.* 2.

With reſpect to theſe and numberleſs other inſtances of the ſame kind, whether they be examples of perſonification or of a figure of ſpeech merely, ſeems to be an arbitrary queſtion. They will be ranged under the former claſs by thoſe only who are endued with a ſprightly imagination. Nor will the judgement even of the ſame perſon be ſteady: it will vary with the preſent ſtate of the ſpirits, lively or compoſed.

Having thus at large explained the preſent figure, its different kinds, and the principles from whence derived; what comes next in order is to aſcertain its proper province, by ſhowing in what caſes it is ſuitable, in what unſuitable. I begin with obſerving, upon paſſionate perſonification, that this figure is not promoted by every paſſion indifferently. All diſpiriting paſſions are averſe to it. Remorſe, in particular, is too ſerious and ſevere, to be gratified by

a

a phantom of the mind. I cannot therefore approve the following ſpeech of Enobarbus, who had deſerted his maſter Antony.

Be witneſs to me, O thou bleſſed moon,
When men revolted ſhall upon record
Bear hateful memory, poor Enobarbus did
Before thy face repent ——————
Oh ſovereign miſtreſs of true melancholy,
The poiſonous damp of night diſpunge upon me,
That life, a very rebel to my will,
May hang no longer on me.
Antony and Cleopatra, act 4. ſc. 7.

If this can be juſtified, it muſt be upon the Heathen ſyſtem of theology, which converted into deities the ſun, moon, and ſtars.

Secondly, After a paſſionate perſonification is properly introduced, it ought to be confined ſtrictly to its proper province, that of gratifying the paſſion; and no ſentiment nor action ought to be exerted by the animated object, but what anſwers that purpoſe. Perſonification is at any rate a bold figure, and ought to be employed with great reſerve. The paſſion of love, for ex-

ample, in a plaintive tone, may give a momentary life to woods and rocks, that the lover may vent his diſtreſs to them: but no paſſion will ſupport a conviction ſo far ſtretched, as that theſe woods and rocks ſhould be living witneſſes to report the diſtreſs to others:

Ch'i' t'ami piu de la mia vita,
Se tu nol ſai, crudele,
Chiedilo à queſte ſelve,
Che te'l diranno, et te'l diran con eſſe
Le fere loro e i duri ſterpi, e i ſaſſi
Di queſti alpeſtri monti,
Ch'i' ho ſi ſpeſſe volte
Inteneriti al ſuon de' miei lamenti.

Paſtor fido, act 3. ſc. 3.

No lover who is not crazed will utter ſuch a ſentiment: it is plainly the operation of the writer, indulging his imagination without regard to nature. The ſame obſervation is applicable to the following paſſage.

In winter's tedious nights ſit by the fire
With good old folks, and let them tell thee tales
Of woful ages, long ago betid:

And

And ere thou bid goodnight, to quiet their grief,
Tell them the lamentable fall of me,
And ſend the hearers weeping to their beds.
For why! the ſenſeleſs brands will ſympathiſe
The heavy accent of thy moving tongue,
And in compaſſion weep the fire out.

Richard II. *act* 5. *ſc.* 1.

One muſt read this paſſage very ſeriouſly to avoid laughing. The following paſſage is quite extravagant: the different parts of the human body are too intimately connected with ſelf, to be perſonified by the power of any paſſion; and after converting ſuch a part into a ſenſible being, it is ſtill worſe to make it be conceived as riſing in rebellion againſt ſelf.

Cleopatra. Haſte, bare my arm, and rouze the
ſerpent's fury.
Coward fleſh ———————
Would'ſt thou conſpire with Cæſar, to betray me,
As thou wert none of mine? I'll force thee to't.

Dryden, All for Love, act 5.

Next comes deſcriptive perſonification; upon which I muſt obſerve in general, that

it ought to be cautiouſly uſed. A perſonage in a tragedy, agitated by a ſtrong paſſion, deals in ſtrong ſentiments; and the reader, catching fire by ſympathy, reliſhes the boldeſt perſonifications. But a writer, even in the moſt lively deſcription, ought to take a lower flight, and content himſelf with ſuch eaſy perſonifications as agree with the tone of mind inſpired by the deſcription. In plain narrative, again, the mind, ſerious and ſedate, rejects perſonification altogether. Strada, in his hiſtory of the Belgic wars, has the following paſſage, which, by a ſtrained elevation above the tone of the ſubject, deviates into burleſk. "Vix de-"ſcenderat a prætoria navi Cæſar; cum "fœda illico exorta in portu tempeſtas, "claſſem impetu disjecit, prætoriam hau-"ſit: quaſi non vecturam amplius Cæſa-"rem, Cæſariſque fortunam *." Neither do I approve, in Shakeſpear, the ſpeech of King John, gravely exhorting the citizens of Angiers to a ſurrender; though a tragic writer has much greater latitude than a hiſtorian,

* Dec. 1. l. 1.

ſtorian. Take the following ſpecimen of this ſpeech.

The cannons have their bowels full of wrath;
And ready mounted are they to ſpit forth
Their iron-indignation 'gainſt your walls.

Act 2. *ſc.* 3.

Secondly, If extraordinary marks of reſpect put upon a perſon of the loweſt rank be ridiculous, not leſs ſo is the perſonification of a mean object. This rule chiefly regards deſcriptive perſonification: for an object can hardly be mean that is the cauſe of a violent paſſion; in that circumſtance, at leaſt, it muſt be an object of importance. With reſpect to this point, it would be in vain to ſet limits to perſonification: taſte is the only rule. A poet of ſuperior genius hath more than others the command of this figure; becauſe he hath more than others the power of inflaming the mind. Homer appears not extravagant in animating his darts and arrows: nor Thomſon in animating the ſeaſons, the winds, the rains, the dews. He even ventures to animate the diamond, and doth it with propriety.

——— That

——————— That poliſh'd bright
And all its native luſtre let abroad,
Dares, as it ſparkles on the fair-one's breaſt,
With vain ambition emulate her eyes.

But there are things familiar and baſe, to which perſonification cannot deſcend. In a compoſed ſtate of mind, to animate a lump of matter even in the moſt rapid flight of fancy, degenerates into burleſk.

How now? What noiſe? that ſpirit's poſſeſs'd with haſte,
That wounds th' unreſiſting poſtern with theſe ſtrokes.

Shakeſpear, Meaſure for Meaſure, act 4. *ſc.* 6.

The following little better:

——————— Or from the ſhore
The plovers when to ſcatter o'er the heath,
And ſing their wild notes to the liſt'ning waſte.

Thomſon, Spring, l. 23.

Speaking of a man's hand cut off in battle:

Te deciſa ſuum, Laride, dextera quærit:
Semianimeſque micant digiti; ferrumque retractant.

Æneid. x. 395.

The

The perſonification here of a hand is inſufferable, eſpecially in a plain narration; not to mention that ſuch a trivial incident is too minutely deſcribed.

The ſame obſervation is applicable to abſtract terms, which ought not to be animated unleſs they have ſome natural dignity. Thomſon, in this article, is quite licentious. Witneſs the following inſtances out of many.

O vale of bliſs! O ſoftly ſwelling hills!
On which *the power of cultivation* lies,
And joys to ſee the wonders of his toil.
Summer, *l.* 1423.

Then ſated *Hunger* bids his brother *Thirſt*
Produce the mighty bowl:
Nor wanting is the brown October, drawn
Mature and perfect, from *his* dark retreat
Of thirty years; and now *his honeſt front*
Flames in the light refulgent.
Autumn, *l.* 516.

Thirdly, it is not ſufficient to avoid improper ſubjects. Some preparation is neceſſary, in order to rouze the mind. The imagination

magination refuſes its aid, till it be warmed at leaſt, if not inflamed. Yet Thomſon, without the leaſt ceremony or preparation, introduceth each ſeaſon as a ſenſible being:

From brightening fields of æther fair diſclos'd,
Child of the ſun, refulgent Summer comes,
In pride of youth, and felt through Nature's depth.
He comes attended by the ſultry hours,
And ever-fanning breezes, on his way,
While from his ardent look, the turning Spring
Averts her bluſhful face, and earth and ſkies
All-ſmiling, to his hot dominion leaves.

Summer, *l.* 1.

See *Winter* comes, to rule the vary'd year,
Sullen and ſad with all his riſing train,
Vapours, and *clouds*, and *ſtorms*.

Winter, *l.* 1.

This has violently the air of writing mechanically without taſte. It is not natural, that the imagination of a writer ſhould be ſo much heated at the very commencement; and, at any rate, he cannot expect ſuch ductility in his readers: but if this practice can be juſtified by authority, Thomſon

Thomſon has one of no mean note: Vida begins his firſt eclogue in the following words.

Dicite, vos Muſæ, et juvenum memorate querelas;
Dicite; nam motas ipſas ad carmina cautes
Et requieſſe ſuos perhibent vaga flumina curſus.

Even Shakeſpear is not always careful to prepare the mind for this bold figure. Take the following inſtance:

——————— Upon theſe taxations,
The clothiers all, not able to maintain
The many to them 'longing, have put off
The ſpinſters, carders, fullers, weavers; who,
Unfit for other life, compell'd by hunger
And lack of other means, in deſp'rate manner
Daring th' event to th' teeth, are all in uproar,
And *Danger* ſerves among them.

Henry VIII. *act* 1. *ſc.* 4.

Fourthly, Deſcriptive perſonification ought never to be carried farther than barely to animate the ſubject: and yet poets are not eaſily reſtrained from making this phantom of their own creating behave and act in every reſpect as if it were really a ſenſible

being. By ſuch licence we loſe ſight of the ſubject; and the deſcription is rendered obſcure or unintelligible, inſtead of being more lively and ſtriking. In this view, the following paſſage, deſcribing Cleopatra on ſhipboard, appears to me exceptionable.

The barge ſhe ſat in, like a burniſh'd throne,
Burnt on the water; the poop was beaten gold,
Purple the ſails, and ſo perfumed, that
The winds were love-ſick with 'em.

Antony and Cleopatra, act 2. ſc. 3.

Let the winds be perſonified; I make no objection. But to make them love-ſick, is too far ſtretched; having no reſemblance to any natural action of wind. In another paſſage, where Cleopatra is alſo the ſubject, the perſonification of the air is carried beyond all bounds:

——————————— The city caſt
Its people out upon her; and Antony
Inthron'd i' th' market-place, did ſit alone,
Whiſtling to th' air, which but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,
And made a gap in nature.

Antony and Cleopatra, act 2. ſc. 3.

The

The following perſonification of the earth or ſoil is not leſs wild.

She ſhall be dignify'd with this high honour
To bear my Lady's train; leſt the baſe earth
Should from her veſture chance to ſteal a kiſs;
And of ſo great a favour growing proud,
Diſdain to root the ſummer-ſwelling flower,
And make rough winter everlaſtingly.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona, act 2 ſc. 7.

Shakeſpear, far from approving ſuch intemperance of imagination, puts this ſpeech in the mouth of a ranting lover. Neither can I reliſh what follows.

Omnia quæ, Phœbo quondam meditante, beatus
Audiit Eurotas, juſſitque ediſcere lauros,
Ille canit.

Virgil, Buc. vi. 82.

The chearfulneſs ſingly of a paſtoral ſong, will ſcarce ſupport perſonification in the loweſt degree. But admitting, that a river gently flowing may be imagined a ſenſible being liſtening to a ſong, I cannot enter into the conceit of the river's ordering his laurels to learn the ſong. Here all reſem-

blance to any thing real is quite loſt. This however is copied literally by one of our greateſt poets; early indeed, before maturity of taſte or judgement.

Thames heard the numbers as he flow'd along,
And bade his willows learn the moving ſong.
Pope's Paſtorals, paſt. 4. *l.* 13.

This author, in riper years, is guilty of a much greater deviation from the rule. Dullneſs may be imagined a deity or idol, to be worſhipped by bad writers: but then ſome ſort of diſguiſe is requiſite, ſome baſtard virtue muſt be beſtowed, to give this idol a plauſible appearance. Yet in the *Dunciad*, dullneſs, without the leaſt diſguiſe, is made the object of worſhip. The mind rejects ſuch a fiction as unnatural; for dullneſs is a defect, of which even the dulleſt mortal is aſhamed:

Then he: great tamer of all human art, *&c.*
Book i. 163.

The following inſtance is ſtretched beyond all reſemblance. It is bold to take a part

or

or member of a living creature, and to beſtow upon it life, volition, and action: after animating two ſuch members, it is ſtill bolder to make them envy each other; for this is wide of any reſemblance to reality:

——————— De noſtri baci
Meritamente ſia giudice quella, *&c.*
Paſtor Fido, act 2. *ſc.* 1.

Fifthly, The enthuſiaſm of paſſion may have the effect to prolong paſſionate perſonification: but deſcriptive perſonification cannot be diſpatched in too few words. A minute deſcription diſſolves the charm, and makes the attempt to perſonify appear ridiculous. Homer ſucceeds in animating his darts and arrows: but ſuch perſonification ſpun out in a French tranſlation, is mere burleſk:

Et la fléche en furie, avide de ſon ſang,
Part, vole à lui, l'atteint, et lui perce le flanc.

Horace ſays happily, "Poſt equitem ſedet "atra Cura." See how this thought degenerates

nerates by being divided, like the former, into a number of minute parts:

Un fou rempli d'erreurs, que le trouble accompagne
Et malade à la ville ainſi qu'à la campagne,
En vain monte à cheval pour tromper ſon ennui,
Le Chagrin monte en croupe et galope avec lui.

The following paſſage is, if poſſible, ſtill more faulty.

Her fate is whiſper'd by the gentle breeze,
And told in ſighs to all the trembling trees;
The trembling trees, in ev'ry plain and wood,
Her fate remurmur to the ſilver flood;
The ſilver flood, ſo lately calm, appears
Swell'd with new paſſion, and o'erflows with tears;
The winds, and trees, and floods, her death deplore,
Daphne, our grief! our glory! now no more.
Pope's Paſtorals, iv. 61.

Let grief or love have the power to animate the winds, the trees, the floods, provided the figure be diſpatched in a ſingle expreſſion. Even in that caſe, the figure ſeldom has a good effect; becauſe grief or love of the paſtoral kind, are cauſes rather too faint for ſo violent an effect as imagining the winds, trees,

trees, or floods, to be ſenſible beings. But when this figure is deliberately ſpread out with great regularity and accuracy through many lines, the reader, inſtead of reliſhing it, is ſtruck with its ridiculous appearance.

SECT. II.

APOSTROPHE.

THis figure and the former are derived from the ſame principle. If, to gratify a plaintive paſſion, we can beſtow a momentary ſenſibility upon an inanimate object, it is not more difficult to beſtow a momentary preſence upon a ſenſible being who is abſent.

Hinc Drepani me portus et illætabilis ora
Accipit. Hic, pelagi tot tempeſtatibus actus,
Heu! genitorem, omnis curæ caſuſque levamen,
Amitto Anchiſen: *hic me pater optime fe'jum*
Deſeris, heu! tantis nequicquam erepte periclis.
Nec vates Helenus, cum multa horrenda moneret,
Hos mihi prædixit luctus; non dira Celæno.
Æneid. iii. 707.

This

This figure is ſometimes joined with the former: things inanimate, to qualify them for liſtening to a paſſionate expoſtulation, are not only perſonified, but alſo conceived to be preſent.

Et, ſi fata Deûm, ſi mens non læva fuiſſet,
Impulerat ferro Argolicas fœdare latebras:
Trojaque nunc ſtares, Priamique arx alta maneres.
Æneid. ii. 54.

Helena. ——————— Poor Lord, is't I
That chaſe thee from thy country, and expoſe
Thoſe tender limbs of thine to the event
Of non-ſparing war? And is it I
That drive thee from the ſportive court, where thou
Waſt ſhot at with fair eyes, to be the mark
Of ſmoky muſkets? O you leaden meſſengers,
That ride upon the violent ſpeed of fire,
Fly with falſe aim; pierce the ſtill moving air,
That ſings with piercing; do not touch my Lord.
All's well that ends well, act 3. *ſc.* 4.

This figure, like all others, requires an agitation of mind. In plain narrative, as, for example, in giving the genealogy of a family, it has no good effect:

—— Fauno

——— Fauno Picus pater; iſque parentem
Te, Saturne, refert; tu ſanguinis ultimus auctor.
Æneid. vii. 48.

SECT. III.

HYPERBOLE.

IN this figure we have another effect of the foregoing principle. An object uncommon with reſpect to ſize, either very great of its kind or very little, ſtrikes us with ſurpriſe; and this emotion, like all others, prone to gratification, forces upon the mind a momentary conviction that the object is greater or leſs than it is in reality. The ſame effect, preciſely, attends figurative grandeur or littleneſs. Every object that produceth ſurpriſe by its ſingularity, is always ſeen in a falſe light while the emotion ſubſiſts: circumſtances are exaggerated beyond truth; and it is not till after the emotion ſubſides, that things appear as they are. A writer, taking advantage of this

natural deluſion, enriches his deſcription greatly by the hyperbole. And the reader, even in his cooleſt moments, reliſhes this figure, being ſenſible that it is the operation of nature upon a warm fancy.

It will be obſerved, that a writer is generally more ſucceſsful in magnifying by a hyperbole than in diminiſhing: a minute object contracts the mind, and fetters its power of conception; but the mind, dilated and inflamed with a grand object, moulds objects for its gratification with great facility. Longinus, with reſpect to the diminiſhing power of a hyperbole, cites the following ludicrous thought from a comic poet. "He was owner of a bit of ground "not larger than a Lacedemonian let-"ter.*" But, for the reaſon now given, the hyperbole has by far the greater force in magnifying objects; of which take the following ſpecimen.

For all the land which thou ſeeſt, to thee will I give it, and to thy ſeed for ever. And I will make thy ſeed as the duſt of the earth: ſo that if a

* Chap. 31. of his treatiſe on the ſublime.

man

man can number the duſt of the earth, then ſhall thy ſeed alſo be numbered.

Geneſis xiii. 15. 16.

Illa vel intactæ ſegetis per ſumma volaret
Gramina: nec teneras curſu læſiſſet ariſtas.

Æneid. vii. 808.

——— Atque imo barathri ter gurgite vaſtos
Sorbet in abruptum fluctus, rurſuſque ſub auras
Erigit alternos, et ſidera verberat undâ.

Æneid. iii. 421.

——— Horrificis juxta tonat Ætna ruinis,
Interdumque atram prorumpit ad æthera nubem,
Turbine fumantem piceo et candente favilla:
Attollitque globos flammarum, et ſidera lambit.

Æneid. iii. 571.

Speaking of Polyphemus,

——— Ipſe arduus, altaque pulſat
Sidera.

Æneid. iii. 619.

——— When he ſpeaks,
The air, a charter'd libertine, is ſtill.

Henry V. *act* 1. *ſc.* 1.

Now ſhield with ſhield, with helmet helmet clos'd,
To armour armour, lance to lance oppos'd,
Hoſt againſt hoſt with ſhadowy ſquadrons drew,
The ſounding darts in iron tempeſts flew,
Victors and vanquiſh'd join promiſcuous cries,
And ſhrilling ſhouts and dying groans ariſe;
With ſtreaming blood the ſlipp'ry fields are dy'd,
And ſlaughter'd heroes ſwell the dreadful tide.

Iliad iv. 508.

The following may alſo paſs, though ſtretched pretty far.

Econjungendo à temerario ardire
Eſtrema forza, e infaticabil lena
Vien che ſi' impetuoſo il ferro gire,
Che ne trema la terra, e'l ciel balena.

Gieruſalem, cant. 6. ſt. 46.

Quintilian * is ſenſible that this figure is natural. " For," ſays he, " not content-" ed with truth, we naturally incline to " augment or diminiſh beyond it; and for " that reaſon the hyperbole is familiar even " among the vulgar and illiterate." And he adds, very juſtly, " That the hyperbole " is then proper, when the ſubject of itſelf

* L. 8. cap. 6. in fin.

" exceeds

" exceeds the common meaſure." From theſe premiſſes, one would not expect the following concluſion, the only reaſon he can find for juſtifying this figure of ſpeech. " Conceditur enim amplius dicere, quia " dici quantum eſt, non poteſt: meliuſque " ultra quam citra ſtat oratio." (We are indulged to ſay more than enough, becauſe we cannot ſay enough; and it is better to be over than under). In the name of wonder, why this ſlight and childiſh reaſon, when immediately before he had made it evident, that the hyperbole is founded on human nature? I could not reſiſt this perſonal ſtroke of criticiſm, intended not againſt our author, for no human creature is exempt from error; but againſt the blind veneration that is paid to the ancient claſſic writers, without diſtinguiſhing their blemiſhes from their beauties.

Having examined the nature of this figure, and the principle on which it is erected; I proceed, as in the firſt ſection, to ſome rules by which it ought to be governed. And in the firſt place, it is a capital fault to introduce an hyperbole in the deſcription

ſcription of an ordinary object or event which creates no ſurpriſe. In ſuch a caſe, the hyperbole is altogether unnatural, being deſtitute of ſurpriſe, the only foundation that can ſupport it. Take the following inſtance, where the ſubject is extremely familiar, *viz.* ſwimming to gain the ſhore after a ſhipwreck.

I ſaw him beat the ſurges under him,
And ride upon their backs; he trode the water;
Whoſe enmity he flung aſide, and breaſted
The ſurge moſt ſwoln that met him: his bold head
'Bove the contentious waves he kept, and oar'd
Himſelf with his good arms, in luſty ſtrokes
To th' ſhore, that o'er his wave-born baſis bow'd,
As ſtooping to relieve him.

Tempeſt, act 2. *ſc.* 1.

In the next place, it may be gathered from what is ſaid, that an hyperbole can never ſuit the tone of any diſpiriting paſſion. Sorrow in particular will never prompt ſuch a figure; and for that reaſon the following hyperboles muſt be condemned as unnatural.

K. Rich.

K. Rich. Aumerle, thou weep'ſt, my tender-hearted couſin!
We'll make foul weather with deſpiſed tears;
Our ſighs, and they, ſhall lodge the ſummer-corn,
And make a dearth in this revolting land.

Richard II. *act* 3. *ſc.* 6.

Draw them to Tyber's bank, and weep your tears
Into the channel, till the loweſt ſtream
Do kiſs the moſt exalted ſhores of all.

Julius Cæſar, act 1. *ſc.* 1.

Thirdly, a writer, if he wiſh to ſucceed, ought always to have the reader in his eye. He ought in particular never to venture a bold thought or expreſſion, till the reader be warmed and prepared for it. For this reaſon, an hyperbole in the beginning of any work can never be in its place. Example:

Jam pauca aratro jugera regiæ
Moles relinquent.

Horat. Carm. lib. 2. *ode.* 15.

In the fourth place, the niceſt point of all, is to aſcertain the natural limits of an hyperbole, beyond which being overſtrained it has

has a bad effect. Longinus, in the above-cited chapter, with great propriety of thought, enters a caveat againſt an hyperbole of this kind. He compares it to a bowſtring, which relaxes by overſtraining, and produceth an effect directly oppoſite to what is intended. I pretend not to aſcertain any preciſe boundary: the attempt would be difficult, if not impracticable. I muſt therefore be ſatisfied with an humbler taſk, which is, to give a ſpecimen of what I reckon overſtrained hyperboles; and I ſhall be alſo extremely curt upon this ſubject, becauſe examples are to be found every where. No fault is more common among writers of inferior rank; and inſtances are found even among thoſe of the fineſt taſte; witneſs the following hyperbole, too bold even for an Hotſpur.

Hotſpur talking of Mortimer:

In ſingle oppoſition hand to hand,
He did confound the beſt part of an hour
In changing hardiment with great Glendower.
Three times they breath'd, and three times did they drink,

Upon

Upon agreement, of ſwift Severn's flood;
Who then affrighted with their bloody looks,
Ran fearfully among the trembling reeds,
And hid his criſp'd head in the hollow bank
Blood-ſtained with theſe valiant combatants.

Firſt Part Henry IV. *act* 1. *ſc.* 4.

Speaking of Henry V.

England ne'er had a King until his time:
Virtue he had, deſerving to command:
His brandiſh'd ſword did blind men with its beams;
His arms ſpread wider than a dragon's wings:
His ſparkling eyes, replete with awful fire,
More dazzled, and drove back his enemies,
Than mid-day ſun fierce bent againſt their faces.
What ſhould I ſay? his deeds exceed all ſpeech:
He never lifted up his hand, but conquer'd.

Firſt Part Henry VI. *act* 1. *ſc.* 1.

Laſtly, an hyperbole after it is introduced with all advantages, ought to be comprehended within the feweſt words poſſible. As it cannot be reliſhed but in the hurry and ſwelling of the mind, a leiſurely view diſſolves the charm, and diſcovers the deſcription to be extravagant at leaſt, and perhaps alſo ridiculous. This fault is pal-

pable in a ſonnet which paſſeth for one of the moſt complete in the French language. Phillis is made as far to outſhine the ſun as he outſhines the ſtars.

Le ſilence regnoit ſur la terre et ſur l'onde,
L'air devenoit ſerain, *&c.*
Collection of French epigrams, vol. 1. *p.* 66.

There is in Chaucer a thought expreſſed in a ſingle line, which ſets a young beauty in a more advantageous light, than the whole of this much-laboured poem.

Up roſe the ſun, and up roſe Emelie.

SECT. IV.

The means or inſtrument conceived to be the agent.

IN viewing a group of things, we have obviouſly a natural tendency to beſtow all poſſible perfection upon that particular object which makes the greateſt figure. The emotion raiſed by the object, is, by this

this means, thoroughly gratified; and if the emotion be lively, it prompts us even to exceed nature in the conception we form of the object. Take the following examples.

For Neleus' ſons Alcides' *rage* had ſlain.

A broken rock the *force* of Pirus threw.

In theſe inſtances, the rage of Hercules and the force of Pirus, being the capital circumſtances, are ſo far exalted as to be conceived the agents that produce the effects.

In the following inſtance, hunger being the chief circumſtance in the deſcription, is itſelf imagined to be the patient.

Whoſe hunger has not taſted food theſe three days.
Jane Shore.

——————— As when the *force*
Of ſubterranean wind tranſports a hill.
Paradiſe Loſt.

——————— As when the *potent rod*
Of Amram's ſon in Egypt's evil day
Wav'd round the coaſt, upcall'd a pitchy cloud
Of locuſts. *Paradiſe Loſt.*

SECT. V.

A figure, which, among related objects, extends properties of one to another.

THIS figure is not dignified with a proper name, becauſe it has been overlooked by all writers. It merits, however, place in this work; and muſt be diſtinguiſhed from thoſe formerly handled, as depending on a different principle. *Giddy brink*, *jovial wine*, *daring wound*, are examples of this figure. Here are expreſſions that certainly import not the ordinary relation of an adjective to its ſubſtantive. A *brink*, for example, cannot be termed *giddy* in a proper ſenſe: neither can it be termed *giddy* in any figurative ſenſe that can import any of its qualities or attributes. When we attend to the expreſſion, we diſcover that a *brink* is termed *giddy* from producing that effect in thoſe who ſtand on it. In the ſame manner a wound is ſaid to be daring, not

not with reſpect to itſelf, but with reſpect to the boldneſs of the perſon who inflicts it: and wine is ſaid to be jovial, as inſpiring mirth and jollity. Thus the attributes of one ſubject, are extended to another with which it is connected; and ſuch expreſſion muſt be conſidered as a figure, becauſe it deviates from ordinary language.

How are we to account for this figure, for we ſee it lies in the thought, and to what principle ſhall we refer it? Have poets a privilege to alter the nature of things, and at pleaſure to beſtow attributes upon ſubjects to which theſe attributes do not belong? It is an evident truth, which we have had often occaſion to inculcate, that the mind, in idea, paſſeth eaſily and ſweetly along a train of connected objects; and, where the objects are intimately connected, that it is diſpoſed to carry along the good or bad properties of one to another; eſpecially where it is in any degree inflamed with theſe properties *. From this principle is derived the figure under conſideration.

* See chap. 2. part 1. ſect. 4.

Language,

Language, invented for the communication of thought, would be imperfect, if it were not expreſſive even of the ſlighter propenſities and more delicate feelings. But language cannot remain ſo imperfect, among a people who have received any poliſh; becauſe language is regulated by internal feeling, and is gradually ſo improved as to expreſs whatever paſſes in the mind. Thus, for example, a ſword in the hand of a coward, is, in poetical diction, termed *a coward ſword:* the expreſſion is ſignificative of an internal operation; for the mind, in paſſing from the agent to its inſtrument, is diſpoſed to extend to the latter the properties of the former. Governed by the ſame principle, we ſay *liſtening* fear, by extending the attribute *liſtening* of the man who liſtens, to the paſſion with which he is moved. In the expreſſion, *bold deed*, or *audax facinus*, we extend to the effect, what properly belongs to the cauſe. But not to waſte time by making a commentary upon every expreſſion of this kind, the beſt way to give a complete view of the ſubject, is to exhibit

exhibit a table of the different connections that may give occasion to this figure. And in viewing this table, it will be observed, that the figure can never have any grace but where the connections are of the most intimate kind.

1. An attribute of the cause expressed as an attribute of the effect.

Audax facinus.

Of yonder fleet a *bold* discovery make.

An impious mortal gave the *daring* wound.

——————— To my *adventrous* song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar.
Paradise Lost.

2. An attribute of the effect expressed as an attribute of the cause.

Quos periisse ambos *misera* censebam in mari.
Plautus.

No wonder, fallen such a *pernicious* height.
Paradise Lost.

3. An

3. An effect expreſſed as an attribute of the cauſe.

Jovial wine, Giddy brink, Drowſy night, Muſing midnight, Panting height, Aſtoniſh'd thought, Mournful gloom.

Caſting a dim *religious* light.

Milton, Comus.

And the *merry* bells ring round,
And the *jocund* rebecks ſound.

Milton, Allegro.

4. An attribute of a ſubject beſtowed upon one of its parts or members.

Longing arms.

It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierc'd the *fearful* hollow of thine ear.

Romeo and Juliet, act 3. ſc. 7.

——————— Oh, lay by
Thoſe moſt ungentle looks and angry weapons;
Unleſs you mean my griefs and killing fears
Should ſtretch me out at your *relentleſs* feet.

Fair Penitent, act 3.

—— And

——————And ready now
To ſtoop with *wearied* wing, and *willing* feet,
On the bare outſide of this world.
Paradiſe Loſt, b. 3.

5. A quality of the agent given to the inſtrument with which it operates.

Why peep your *coward* ſwords half out their ſhells?

6. An attribute of the agent given to the ſubject upon which it operates.

High-climbing hill. *Milton.*

7. A quality of one ſubject given to another.

Icci, *beatis* nunc Arabum invides
Gazis. *Hora. Carm. l.* 1. *ode* 29.

When ſapleſs age, and weak unable limbs,
Should bring thy father to his *drooping* chair.
Shakeſpear.

By art, the pilot through the boiling deep
And howling tempeſt, ſteers the *fearleſs* ſhip.
Iliad xxiii. 385.

Then, nothing loath, th' enamour'd fair he led,
And ſunk tranſported on the *conſcious* bed.
Odyſſ. viii. 337.

A *ſtupid* moment motionleſs ſhe ſtood.
Summer, *l.* 1336.

8. A circumſtance connected with a ſubject, expreſſed as a quality of the ſubject.

Breezy ſummit.

'Tis ours the chance of fighting fields to try.
Iliad i. 301.

Oh! had I dy'd before that well-fought wall.
Odyſſ. v. 395.

From this table it appears, that the expreſſing an effect as an attribute of the cauſe, is not ſo agreeable as the oppoſite expreſſion. The deſcent from cauſe to effect is natural and eaſy: the oppoſite direction reſembles retrograde motion *. *Panting height*, for example, *aſtoniſh'd thought*, are ſtrained and uncouth expreſſions, which

* See chap. 1.

a writer of taſte will avoid. For the ſame reaſon, an epithet is unſuitable, which at preſent is not applicable to the ſubject, however applicable it may be afterward.

Submerſaſque obrue puppes. *Æneid.* i. 73.

And mighty *ruins* fall. *Iliad* v. 411.

Impious ſons their *mangled* fathers wound.

Another rule regards this figure, That the property of one object ought not to be beſtowed upon another with which it is incongruous:

K. Rich. ——— How dare thy joints forget
To pay their *awful* duty to our preſence.
Richard II. *act* 3. *ſc.* 6.

The connection betwixt an awful ſuperior and his ſubmiſſive dependent is ſo intimate, that an attribute may readily be transferred from the one to the other. But awfulneſs cannot be ſo transferred, becauſe it is inconſiſtent with ſubmiſſion.

SECT VI.

Metaphor and Allegory.

A Metaphor differs from a ſimile, in form only, not in ſubſtance. In a ſimile the two different ſubjects are kept diſtinct in the expreſſion, as well as in the thought: in a metaphor, the two ſubjects are kept diſtinct in thought only, not in expreſſion. A hero reſembles a lion, and upon that reſemblance many ſimiles have been made by Homer and other poets. But inſtead of reſembling a lion, let us take the aid of the imagination, and feign or figure the hero to be a lion. By this variation the ſimile is converted into a metaphor; which is carried on by deſcribing all the qualities of a lion that reſemble thoſe of the hero. The fundamental pleaſure here, that of reſemblance, belongs to thought as diſtinguiſhed from expreſſion. There is an additional pleaſure which ariſes from the expreſſion.

The

The poet, by figuring his hero to be a lion, goes on to deſcribe the lion in appearance, but in reality the hero; and his deſcription is peculiarly beautiful, by expreſſing the virtues and qualities of the hero in new terms, which, properly ſpeaking, belong not to him, but to a different being. This will better be underſtood by examples. A family connected with a common parent, reſembles a tree, the trunk and branches of which are connected with a common root. But let us ſuppoſe, that a family is figured not barely to be like a tree, but to be a tree; and then the ſimile will be converted into a metaphor, in the following manner.

Edward's ſev'n ſons, whereof thyſelf art one,
Were ſev'n fair branches, ſpringing from one root:
Some of theſe branches by the deſt'nies cut:
But Thomas, my dear Lord, my life, my Glo'-
ſter,
One flouriſhing branch of his moſt royal root,
Is hack'd down, and his ſummer-leaves all faded,
By Envy's hand and Murder's bloody axe.

Richard II. *act* 1. *ſc.* 3.

Figuring

Figuring human life to be a voyage at ſea:

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in ſhallows and in miſeries.
On ſuch a full ſea are we now afloat;
And we muſt take the current when it ſerves,
Or loſe our ventures.

Julius Cæſar, act 4. ſc. 5.

Figuring glory and honour to be a garland of freſh flowers:

Hotſpur. ——————Would to heav'n,
Thy name in arms were now as great as mine!
Pr. Henry. I'll make it greater, ere I part from thee;
And all the budding honours on thy creſt
I'll crop, to make a garland for my head.

Firſt Part Henry IV. *act 5. ſc. 9.*

Figuring a man who hath acquired great reputation and honour to be a tree full of fruit:

———————— Oh, boys, this ſtory
The world may read in me: my body's mark'd
With Roman ſwords; and my report was once

Firſt

Firſt with the beſt of note. Cymbeline lov'd me;
And when a ſoldier was the theme, my name
Was not far off: then was I as a tree,
Whoſe boughs did bend with fruit. But in one night,
A ſtorm or robbery, call it what you will,
Shook down my mellow hangings, nay my leaves;
And left me bare to weather.

Cymbeline, act 3. ſc. 3.

I am aware that the term *metaphor* has been uſed in a more extenſive ſenſe than I give it; but I thought it of conſequence, in matters of ſome intricacy, to ſeparate things that differ from each other, and to confine words within their moſt proper ſenſe. An allegory differs from a metaphor; and what I would chuſe to call *a figure of ſpeech*, differs from both. I ſhall proceed to explain theſe differences. A metaphor is defined above to be an operation of the imagination, figuring one thing to be another. An allegory requires no operation of the imagination, nor is one thing figured to be another: it conſiſts in chuſing a ſubject having properties or circumſtances reſembling thoſe of the

the principal ſubject; and the former is deſcribed in ſuch a manner as to repreſent the latter. The ſubject thus repreſented is kept out of view; we are left to diſcover it by reflection; and we are pleaſed with the diſcovery, becauſe it is our own work. Quintilian * gives the following inſtance of an allegory,

O navis, referent in mare te novi
Fluctus. O quid agis? fortiter occupa portum.
Horat. lib. 1. *ode* 14.

and explains it elegantly in the following words: "Totuſque ille Horatii locus, quo "navim pro republica, fluctuum tempe- "ſtates pro bellis civilibus, portum pro pa- "ce atque concordia, dicit."

There cannot be a finer or more correct allegory than the following, in which a vineyard is put for God's own people the Jews.

Thou haſt brought a vine out of Egypt: thou haſt caſt out the heathen, and planted it. Thou didſt cauſe it to take deep root, and it filled the

* L. 8. cap. 6. ſect. 2.

land.

land. The hills were covered with its ſhadow, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. Why haſt thou then broken down her hedges, ſo that all which paſs do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waſte it, and the wild beaſt doth devour it. Return, we beſeech thee, O God of hoſts: look down from heaven, and behold and viſit this vine, and the vineyard thy right hand hath planted, and the branch thou madeſt ſtrong for thyſelf.

Pſalm 80.

In a word, an allegory is in every reſpect ſimilar to an hieroglyphical painting, excepting only, that words are uſed inſtead of colours. Their effects are preciſely the ſame. A hieroglyphic raiſes two images in the mind; one ſeen, which repreſents one not ſeen. An allegory does the ſame. The repreſentative ſubject is deſcribed; and it is by reſemblance that we are enabled to apply the deſcription to the ſubject repreſented.

In a figure of ſpeech, neither is there any fiction of the imagination employ'd, nor a repreſentative ſubject introduced. A figure of ſpeech, as imply'd from

its name, regards the expreſſion only, not the thought; and it may be defined, the employing a word in a ſenſe different from what is proper to it. Thus youth or the beginning of life, is expreſſed figuratively by *morning of life*. Morning is the beginning of the day; and it is transferred ſweetly and eaſily to ſignify the beginning of any other ſeries, life eſpecially, the progreſs of which is reckoned by days.

Figures of ſpeech are reſerved for a ſeparate ſection; but a metaphor and allegory are ſo much connected, that it is neceſſary to handle them together: the rules for diſtinguiſhing the good from the bad, are common to both. We ſhall therefore proceed to theſe rules, after adding ſome examples to illuſtrate the nature of an allegory. Horace ſpeaking of his love to Pyrrha, which was now extinguiſhed, expreſſes himſelf thus.

——— Me tabulâ ſacer
Votivâ paries indicat uvida
Suſpendiſſe potenti
Veſtimenta maris Deo.

Carm. l. 1. *ode* 5.

Again,

Again,

Phœbus volentem prælia me loqui,
Victas et urbes, increpuit lyrâ :
Ne parva Tyrrhenum per æquor
Vela darem.

Carm. l. 4. ode 15.

Queen. Great Lords, wise men ne'er sit and wail
their loss,
But chearly seek how to redress their harms.
What though the mast be now blown overboard,
The cable broke, the holding-anchor lost,
And half our sailors swallow'd in the flood ?
Yet lives our pilot still. Is't meet, that he
Should leave the helm, and, like a fearful lad,
With tearful eyes add water to the sea ;
And give more strength to that which hath too
much ?
While in his moan the ship splits on the rock,
Which industry and courage might have sav'd ?
Ah, what a shame! ah, what a fault were this!

Third Part Henry VI. *act* 5. *sc.* 5.

Oroonoko. Ha! thou hast rous'd
The lion in his den, he stalks abroad
And the wide forest trembles at his roar.
I find the danger now.

Oroonoko, act 3. *sc.* 2.

The rules that govern metaphors and allegories, are of two kinds: thoſe of the firſt kind concern the conſtruction of a metaphor or allegory, and aſcertain what are perfect and what are faulty: thoſe of the other kind concern the propriety or impropriety of introduction, in what circumſtances theſe figures may be admitted, and in what circumſtances they are out of place. I begin with rules of the firſt kind; ſome of which coincide with thoſe already given with reſpect to ſimiles; ſome are peculiar to metaphors and allegories.

And in the firſt place, it has been obſerved, that a ſimile cannot be agreeable where the reſemblance is either too ſtrong or too faint. This holds equally in a metaphor and allegory; and the reaſon is the ſame in all. In the following inſtances, the reſemblance is too faint to be agreeable.

Malcolm. ——— But there's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuouſneſs: your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons, and your maids, could not fill up
The ciſtern of my luſt.

Macbeth, act 4. *ſc.* 4.

The

The beſt way to judge of this metaphor, is to convert it into a ſimile; which would be bad, becauſe there is ſcarce any reſemblance betwixt luſt and a ciſtern, or betwixt enormous luſt and a large ciſtern.

Again,

He cannot buckle his diſtemper'd cauſe
Within the belt of rule.

Macbeth, act 5. ſc. 2.

There is no reſemblance betwixt a diſtempered cauſe and any body that can be confined within a belt.

Again,

Steep me in poverty to the very lips.

Othello, act 4. ſc. 9.

Poverty here muſt be conceived a fluid, which it reſembles not in any manner.

Speaking to Bolingbroke baniſh'd for ſix years.

The ſullen paſſage of thy weary ſteps
Eſteem a foil, wherein thou art to ſet

The

The precious jewel of thy home-return.
Richard II. *act* 1. *ſc.* 6.

Again,

Here is a letter, lady,
And every word in it a gaping wound
Iſſuing life-blood.
Merchant of Venice, act 3. *ſc.* 3.

The following metaphor is ſtrained beyond all endurance. Timur-bec, known to us by the name of Tamarlane the Great, writes to Bajazet Emperor of the Ottomans in the following terms.

Where is the monarch who dares reſiſt us? where is the potentate who doth not glory in being numbered among our attendants? As for thee, deſcended from a Turcoman ſailor, ſince the veſſel of thy unbounded ambition hath been wreck'd in the gulf of thy ſelf-love, it would be proper, that thou ſhouldſt take in the ſails of thy temerity, and caſt the anchor of repentance in the port of ſincerity and juſtice, which is the port of ſafety; leſt the tempeſt of our vengeance make thee periſh in the ſea of the puniſhment thou deſerveſt.

Such ſtrained figures, it is obſervable, are not

not unfrequent in the firſt dawn of refinement. The mind in a new enjoyment knows no bounds, and is generally carried to exceſs, till experience diſcover the juſt medium.

Secondly, whatever reſemblance ſubjects may have, it is wrong to put one for another if they bear no mutual proportion. Where a very high and a very low ſubject are compared, the ſimile takes on an air of burleſk; and the ſame will be the effect, where the one is imagined to be the other, as in a metaphor, or made to repreſent the other, as in an allegory.

Thirdly, theſe figures, a metaphor in particular, ought not to be extended to a great length, nor be crowded with many minute circumſtances; for in that caſe it is ſcarcely poſſible to avoid obſcurity. It is difficult, during any courſe of time, to ſupport a lively image of one thing being another. A metaphor drawn out to any length, inſtead of illuſtrating or enlivening the principal ſubject, becomes diſagreeable by overſtraining the mind. Cowley is extremely

tremely licentious in this way. Take the following inſtance:

Great, and wiſe conqu'ror, who where-e'er
Thou com'ſt, doſt fortify, and ſettle there!
Who canſt defend as well as get;
And never hadſt one quarter beat up yet;
Now thou art in, thou ne'er will part
With one inch of my vanquiſh'd heart;
For ſince thou took'ſt it by aſſault from me,
'Tis garriſon'd ſo ſtrong with thoughts of thee
It fears no beauteous enemy.

For the ſame reaſon, however agreeable at firſt long allegories may be by their novelty, they never afford any laſting pleaſure: witneſs the *Fairy Queen*, which with great power of expreſſion, variety of images, and melody of verſification, is ſcarce ever read a ſecond time.

In the fourth place, the compariſon carried on in a ſimile, being in a metaphor ſunk, and the principal ſubject being imagined that very thing which it only reſembles, an opportunity is furniſhed to deſcribe it in terms taken ſtrictly or literally with reſpect to its imagined nature. This ſuggeſts another

another rule, That in conſtructing a metaphor, the writer ought to confine himſelf to the ſimpleſt expreſſions, and make uſe of ſuch words only as are applicable literally to the imagined nature of his ſubject. Figurative words ought carefully to be avoided; for ſuch complicated images, inſtead of ſetting the principal ſubject in a ſtrong light, involve it in a cloud; and it is well if the reader, without rejecting by the lump, endeavour patiently to gather the plain meaning, regardleſs of the figures:

A ſtubborn and unconquerable flame
Creeps in his veins, and drinks the ſtreams of life.
Lady Jane Gray, act 1. *ſc.* 1.

Copied from Ovid,

Sorbent avidæ præcordia flammæ.
Metamorphoſes, lib. ix. 172.

Let us analize this expreſſion. That a fever may be imagined a flame, I admit; though more than one ſtep is neceſſary to come at the reſemblance. A fever, by heating the body, reſembles fire; and it is no ſtretch to imagine a fever to be a fire.

Again, by a figure of ſpeech, flame may be put for fire, becauſe they are commonly conjoined; and therefore a fever may alſo be imagined a flame. But now admitting a fever to be a flame, its effects ought to be explained in words that agree literally to a flame. This rule is not obſerved here; for a flame *drinks* figuratively only, not properly.

King Henry to his ſon Prince Henry:

Thou hid'ſt a thouſand daggers in thy thoughts,
Which thou haſt whetted on thy ſtony heart
To ſtab at half an hour of my frail life.
Second Part Henry IV. *act* 4. *ſc.* 11.

Such faulty metaphors are pleaſantly ridiculed in the *Rehearſal:*

Phyſician. Sir, to conclude, the place you fill has more than amply exacted the talents of a wary pilot; and all theſe threatening ſtorms, which, like impregnate clouds, hover o'er our heads, will, when they once are graſp'd but by the eye of reaſon, melt into fruitful ſhowers of bleſſings on the people.

Bayes. Pray mark that allegory. Is not that good?

Johnſon.

Johnſon. Yes, that graſping of a ſtorm with the eye, is admirable. *Act* 2. *ſc.* 1.

Fifthly, The jumbling different metaphors in the ſame ſentence, or the beginning with one metaphor and ending with another, is commonly called a mixt metaphor. Quintilian bears teſtimony againſt it in the bittereſt terms: "Nam id "quoque in primis eſt cuſtodiendum, ut "quo ex genere cœperis tranſlationis, hoc "deſinas. Multi enim, cum initium a "tempeſtate ſumpſerunt, incendio aut rui-"na finiunt: quæ eſt inconſequentia rerum "fœdiſſima." *L.* 8. *cap.* 6. § 2.

K. Henry. ——— Will you again unknit
This churliſh knot of all-abhorred war,
And move in that obedient orb again,
Where you did give a fair and natural light?
Firſt Part Henry IV. *act* 5. *ſc.* 1.

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to ſuffer
The ſtings and arrows of outrag'ous fortune;
Or to take arms againſt a ſea of troubles,
And by oppoſing end them.
Hamlet, act 3. *ſc.* 2.

In the ſixth place, It is unpleaſant to join different metaphors in the ſame period, even where they are preſerved diſtinct. It is difficult to imagine the ſubject to be firſt one thing and then another in the ſame period without interval: the mind is diſtracted by the rapid tranſition; and when the imagination is put on ſuch hard duty, its images are too faint to produce any good effect:

At regina gravi jamdudum ſaucia cura,
Vulnus alit venis, et cæco carpitur igni.
Æneid. iv. 1.

——————— Eſt mollis flamma medullas
Interea, et tacitum vivit ſub pectore vulnus.
Æneid. iv. 66.

Motum ex Metello conſule civicum,
Bellique cauſas, et vitia, et modos,
Ludumque fortunæ, graveſque
Principum amicitias, et arma
Nondum expiatis uncta cruoribus,
Periculoſæ plenum opus aleæ,
Tractas, et incedis per ignes
Subpoſitos cineri doloſo.
Horat. Carm. l. 2. *ode* 1.

In

In the laſt place, It is ſtill worſe to jumble together metaphorical and natural expreſſion, or to conſtruct a period ſo as that it muſt be underſtood partly metaphorically partly literally. The imagination cannot follow with ſufficient eaſe changes ſo ſudden and unprepared. A metaphor begun and not carried on, hath no beauty; and inſtead of light there is nothing but obſcurity and confuſion. Inſtances of ſuch incorrect compoſition are without number. I ſhall, for a ſpecimen, ſelect a few from different authors:

Speaking of Britain,

This precious ſtone ſet in the ſea
Which ſerves it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defenſive to a houſe
Againſt the envy of leſs happier lands.
Richard II. *act* 2. *ſc.* 1.

In the firſt line Britain is figured to be a precious ſtone. In the following lines, Britain, diveſted of her metaphorical dreſs, is preſented to the reader in her natural appearance.

Theſe

Theſe growing feathers pluck'd from Cæſar's wing,
Will make him fly an ordinary pitch,
Who elſe would ſoar above the view of men,
And keep us all in ſervile fearfulneſs.

Julius Cæſar, act 1. *ſc.* 1.

Rebus anguſtis animoſus atque
Fortis adpare : ſapienter idem
Contrahes vento nimium ſecundo
Turgida vela.

The following is a miſerable jumble of expreſſions, ariſing from an unſteady view of the ſubject betwixt its figurative and natural appearance.

But now from gath'ring clouds deſtruction pours,
Which ruins with mad rage our halcyon hours :
Miſts from black jealouſies the tempeſt form,
Whilſt late diviſions reinforce the ſtorm.

Diſpenſary, canto 3.

To thee, the world its preſent homage pays,
The harveſt early, but mature the praiſe.

Pope's imitation of Horace, b. 2.

Oui,

Oui, ſa pudeur n'eſt que franche grimace,
Qu'une ombre de vertu qui garde mal la place,
Et qui s'evanouit, comme l'on peut ſavoir
Aux rayons du ſoleil qu'une bourſe fait voir.
Molliere, L'Etourdi, act 3. ſc. 2.

Et ſon feu depourvû de ſenſe et de lecture,
S' éteint a chaque pas, faute de nourriture.
Boileau, L'art poetique, chant. 3. l. 319.

Dryden, in his dedication to the tranſlation of *Juvenal*, ſays,

When thus, as I may ſay, before the uſe of the loadſtone, or knowledge of the compaſs, I was ſailing in a vaſt ocean, without other help than the pole-ſtar of the ancients, and the rules of the French ſtage among the moderns, *&c.*

There is a time when factions, by the vehemence of their own fermentation, ſtun and diſable one another. *Bolingbroke.*

This fault of jumbling the figure and plain expreſſion into one confuſed maſs, is not leſs common in allegory than in metaphor. Take the following example.

—— Heu!

——————— Heu! quoties fidem,
Mutatoſque Deos flebit, et aſpera
Nigris æquora ventis
Emirabitur inſolens,
Qui nunc te fruitur credulus aureâ:
Qui ſemper vacuam, ſemper amabilem
Sperat, neſcius auræ
Fallacis. *Horat. Carm. l. 1. ode 5.*

Lord Halifax, ſpeaking of the ancient fabuliſts: "They (ſays he) wrote in ſigns "and ſpoke in parables: all their fables "carry a double meaning: the ſtory is "one and entire; the characters the ſame "throughout; not broken or changed, "and always conformable to the nature "of the creature they introduce. They "never tell you, that the dog which ſnapp'd "at a ſhadow, loſt his troop of horſe; that "would be unintelligible. This is his (Dryden's) new way of telling a ſtory, and "confounding the moral and the fable together." After inſtancing from the hind and panther, he goes on thus: "What relation has the hind to our Saviour? or what notion have we of a "panther's

" panther's bible? If you ſay he means " the church, how does the church feed " on lawns, or range in the foreſt? Let it " be always a church or always a cloven- " footed beaſt, for we cannot bear his " ſhifting the ſcene every line."

A few words more upon allegory. Nothing gives greater pleaſure than this figure, when the repreſentative ſubject bears a ſtrong analogy, in all its circumſtances, to that which is repreſented. But the choice is ſeldom ſo lucky; the reſemblance of the repreſentative ſubject to the principal, being generally ſo faint and obſcure, as to puzzle and not pleaſe. An allegory is ſtill more difficult in painting than in poetry. The former can ſhow no reſemblance but what appears to the eye: the latter hath many other reſources for ſhowing the reſemblance. With reſpect to what the Abbé du Bos * terms mixt allegorical compoſitions, theſe may do in poetry, becauſe in writing the allegory can eaſily be diſtinguiſhed from the hiſtorical part: no perſon

* Reflexions ſur la Poeſie, *&c.* vol. 1. ſect. 24.

miſtakes Virgil's Fame for a real being. But ſuch a mixture in a picture is intolerable; becauſe in a picture the objects muſt appear all of the ſame kind, wholly real or wholly emblematical. The hiſtory of Mary de Medicis, in the palace of Luxenbourg, painted by Rubens, is in a vicious taſte, by a perpetual jumble of real and allegorical perſonages, which produce a diſcordance of parts and an obſcurity upon the whole: witneſs in particular, the tablature repreſenting the arrival of Mary de Medicis at Marſeilles: mixt with the real perſonages, the Nereids and Tritons appear ſounding their ſhells. Such a mixture of fiction and reality in the ſame group, is ſtrangely abſurd. The picture of Alexander and Roxana, deſcribed by Lucian, is gay and fanciful: but it ſuffers by the allegorical figures. It is not in the wit of man to invent an allegorical repreſentation deviating farther from any appearance of reſemblance, than one exhibited by Lewis XIV. *anno* 1664; in which an overgrown chariot, intended to repreſent that of the ſun, is dragg'd

dragg'd along, ſurrounded with men and women, repreſenting the four ages of the world, the celeſtial ſigns, the ſeaſons, the hours, *&c.*: a monſtrous compoſition; and yet ſcarce more abſurd than Guido's tablature of Aurora.

In an allegory, as well as in a metaphor, terms ought to be choſen that properly and literally are applicable to the repreſentative ſubject. Nor ought any circumſtance to be added, that is not proper to the repreſentative ſubject, however juſtly it may be applicable figuratively to the principal. Upon this account the following allegory is faulty.

Ferus et Cupido,
Semper ardentes acuens ſagittas
Cote *cruentâ*.

Horat. l. 2. *ode* 8.

For though blood may ſuggeſt the cruelty of love, it is an improper or immaterial circumſtance in the repreſentative ſubject: water, not blood, is proper for a whetſtone.

We proceed to the next head, which is, to examine in what circumſtances theſe figures

gures are proper, in what improper. This inquiry is not altogether ſuperſeded by what is ſaid upon the ſame ſubject in the chapter of compariſons; becauſe, upon trial, it will be found, that a ſhort metaphor or allegory may be proper, where a ſimile, drawn out to a greater length, and in its nature more ſolemn, would ſcarce be reliſhed. The difference however is not conſiderable; and in moſt inſtances the ſame rules are applicable to both. And, in the firſt place, a metaphor, as well as a ſimile, are excluded from common converſation, and from the deſcription of ordinary incidents.

In the next place, in any ſevere paſſion which totally occupies the mind, metaphor is unnatural. For that reaſon, we muſt condemn the following ſpeech of Macbeth.

Methought, I heard a voice cry, Sleep no more!
Macbeth doth murther ſleep; the innocent ſleep;
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd ſleeve of Care,
The birth of each day's life, ſore Labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great Nature's ſecond courſe,
Chief nouriſher in life's feaſt.——

Act 2. *ſc.* 3.

The

The next example, of deep deſpair, beſide the highly figurative ſtyle, hath more the air of raving than of ſenſe:

Caliſta. Is it the voice of thunder, or my father?
Madneſs! Confuſion! let the ſtorm come on,
Let the tumultuous roar drive all upon me,
Daſh my devoted bark; ye ſurges, break it;
'Tis for my ruin that the tempeſt riſes.
When I am loſt, ſunk to the bottom low,
Peace ſhall return, and all be calm again.
Fair Penitent, act 4.

The metaphor I next introduce, is ſweet and lively, but it ſuits not the fiery temper of Chamont, inflamed with paſſion. Parables are not the language of wrath venting itſelf without reſtraint:

Chamont. You took her up a little tender flower,
Juſt ſprouted on a bank, which the next froſt
Had nip'd; and with a careful loving hand,
Tranſplanted her into your own fair garden,
Where the ſun always ſhines: there long ſhe flouriſh'd,
Grew ſweet to ſenſe and lovely to the eye,
Till at the laſt a cruel ſpoiler came,
Cropt

Cropt this fair roſe, and rifled all its ſweetneſs,
Then caſt it like a loathſome weed away.
Orphan, act 4.

The following ſpeech, full of imagery, is not natural in grief and dejection of mind.

Gonſalez. O my ſon! from the blind dotage
Of a father's fondneſs theſe ills aroſe.
For thee I've been ambitious, baſe and bloody:
For thee I've plung'd into this ſea of ſin;
Stemming the tide with only one weak hand,
While t'other bore the crown, (to wreathe thy brow),
Whoſe weight has ſunk me ere I reach'd the ſhore.
Mourning Bride, act 5. ſc. 6.

The fineſt picture that ever was drawn of deep diſtreſs, is in Macbeth *, where Macduff is repreſented lamenting his wife and children, inhumanly murdered by the tyrant. Struck with the news, he queſtions the meſſenger over and over; not that he doubted the fact, but that his heart revolted againſt ſo cruel a misfortune. After ſtruggling ſome time with his grief, he turns from his wife and children to their ſavage

* Act 4. ſc. 6.

butcher;

butcher; and then gives vent to his reſentment; but ſtill with manlineſs and dignity:

O, I could play the woman with mine eyes,
And braggart with my tongue. But, gentle Heav'n!
Cut ſhort all intermiſſion: front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myſelf;
Within my ſword's length ſet him ——If he 'ſcape,
Then Heav'n forgive him too.

This paſſage is a delicious picture of human nature. One expreſſion only ſeems doubtful. In examining the meſſenger, Macduff expreſſes himſelf thus:

He hath no children ——all my pretty ones!
Did you ſay all? what all? Oh, hell-kite! all?
What! all my pretty little chickens and their dam,
At one fell ſwoop!

Metaphorical expreſſion, I am ſenſible, may ſometimes be uſed with grace, where a regular ſimile would be intolerable: but there are ſituations ſo overwhelming, as not to admit even the ſlighteſt metaphor. It requires great delicacy of taſte to determine with firmneſs, whether the preſent caſe be of that nature. I incline to think it is; and yet

yet I would not willingly alter a ſingle word of this admirable ſcene.

But metaphorical language is proper when a man ſtruggles to bear with dignity or decency a misfortune however great. The ſtruggle agitates and animates the mind:

Wolſey. Farewell, a long farewell, to all my greatneſs!
This is the ſtate of man; to day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hopes; to-morrow bloſſoms,
And bears his bluſhing honours thick upon him;
The third day comes a froſt, a killing froſt,
And when he thinks, good eaſy man, full ſurely
His greatneſs is a ripening, nips his root,
And then he falls as I do.

Henry VIII. *act* 3. *ſc.* 6.

SECT. VII.

Figure of Speech.

IN the ſection immediately foregoing, a figure of ſpeech is defined, "The employing

" ploying a word in a ſenſe different from " what is proper to it;" and the new or uncommon ſenſe of the word is termed *the figurative ſenſe*. The figurative ſenſe muſt have a relation to that which is proper; and the more intimate the relation is, the figure is the more happy. How ornamental this figure is to language, will not be readily imagined by any one who hath not given peculiar attention. I ſhall endeavour to diſplay its capital beauties and advantages. In the firſt place, a word uſed figuratively, together with its new ſenſe, ſuggeſts what it commonly bears: and thus it has the effect to preſent two objects; one ſignified by the figurative ſenſe, which may be termed *the principal object*; and one ſignified by the proper ſenſe, which may be termed *acceſſory*. The principal makes a part of the thought; the acceſſory is merely ornamental. In this reſpect, a figure of ſpeech is preciſely ſimilar to concordant ſounds in muſic, which, without contributing to the melody, make it harmonious. I explain myſelf by examples. *Youth*, by a figure of ſpeech, is termed *the morning of life*. This

expreſſion ſignifies *youth*, the principal object, which enters into the thought: but it ſuggeſts, at the ſame time, the proper ſenſe of *morning*; and this acceſſory object being in itſelf beautiful and connected by reſemblance to the principal object, is not a little ornamental. I give another example, of a different kind, where an attribute is expreſſed figuratively, *Imperious ocean*. Together with the figurative meaning of the epithet *imperious*, there is ſuggeſted its proper meaning, *viz.* the ſtern authority of a deſpotic prince. Upon this figurative power of words, Vida deſcants with great elegance:

Nonne vides, verbis ut veris ſæpe relictis
Accerſant ſimulata, aliundeque nomina porro
Tranſportent, aptentque aliis ea rebus; ut ipſæ,
Exuviaſque novas, res, inſolitoſque colores
Indutæ, ſæpe externi mirentur amictus
Unde illi, lætæque aliena luce fruantur,
Mutatoque habitu, nec jam ſua nomina mallent?
Sæpe ideo, cum bella canunt, incendia credas
Cernere, diluviumque ingens ſurgentibus undis.
Contrà etiam Martis pugnas imitabitur ignis,
Cum furit accenſis acies Vulcania campis.

Nec

Nec turbato oritur quondam minor æquore pugna:
Confligunt animoſi Euri certamine vaſto
Inter ſe, pugnantque adverſis molibus undæ.
Uſque adeo paſſim ſua res inſignia lætæ
Permutantque, juvantque viciſſim; & mutua ſeſe
Altera in alterius transformat protinus ora.
Tum ſpecie capti gaudent ſpectare legentes:
Nam diverſa ſimul datur è re cernere eadem
Multarum ſimulacra animo ſubeuntia rerum.

Poet. lib. 3. l. 44.

In the next place, this figure poſſeſſes a ſignal power of aggrandiſing an object, by the following means. Words, which have no original beauty but what ariſes from their ſound, acquire an adventitious beauty from their meaning. A word ſignifying any thing that is agreeable, becomes by that means agreeable; for the agreeableneſs of the object is communicated to its name *. This acquired beauty, by the force of cuſtom, adheres to the word even when uſed figuratively; and the beauty received from the thing it properly ſignifies, is communicated to the thing which it is made to ſig-

* See chap. 2. part 1. ſect. 4.

nify figuratively. Conſider the foregoing expreſſion *Imperious ocean*, how much more elevated it is than *Stormy ocean*.

Thirdly, this figure hath a happy effect in preventing the familiarity of proper names. The familiarity of a proper name, is communicated to the thing it ſignifies by means of their intimate connection; and the thing is thereby brought down in our feeling *. This bad effect is prevented by uſing a figurative word inſtead of one that is proper; as, for example, when we expreſs the ſky by terming it *the blue vault of heaven*. For though no work made with hands can compare with the ſky in magnificence, the expreſſion however is good, by preventing the object from being brought down by the familiarity of its proper name. With reſpect to the degrading familiarity of proper names, Vida has the following paſſage.

Hinc ſi dura mihi paſſus dicendus Ulyſſes,

* I have often regretted, that a factious ſpirit of oppoſition to the reigning family made it neceſſary in public worſhip to diſtinguiſh the King by his proper name. One will ſcarce imagine, who has not made the trial, how much better it ſounds to pray for our Sovereign Lord the King, without any addition.

Non

Non illum vero memorabo nomine, ſed qui
Et mores hominum multorum vidit, & urbes,
Naufragus everſæ poſt ſæva incendia Trojæ.
Poet. lib. 2. l. 46.

Laſtly, by this figure language is enriched and rendered more copious. In that reſpect, were there no other, a figure of ſpeech is a happy invention. This property is finely touched by Vida:

Quinetiam agricolas ea fandi nota voluptas
Exercet, dum læta ſeges, dum trudere gemmas
Incipiunt vites, ſitientiaque ætheris imbrem
Prata bibunt, ridentque ſatis ſurgentibus agri.
Hanc vulgo ſpeciem propriæ penuria vocis
Intulit, indictiſque urgens in rebus egeſtas.
Quippe ubi ſe vera oſtendebant nomina nuſquam,
Fas erat hinc atque hinc transferre ſimillima veris.
Poet. lib. 3. l. 90.

The beauties I have mentioned belong to every figure of ſpeech. Several other beauties peculiar to one or other ſort, I ſhall have occaſion to remark afterward.

Not only ſubjects, but qualities, actions, effects, may be expreſſed figuratively. Thus as

as to ſubjects, *the gates of breath* for the lips, *the watery kingdom* for the ocean. As to qualities, *fierce* for ſtormy, in the expreſſion *Fierce winter: altus* for profundus, *altus puteus, altum mare: Breathing* for perſpiring, *Breathing plants.* Again, as to actions, the ſea *rages:* Time will *melt* her frozen thoughts: Time *kills* grief. An effect is put for the cauſe, as *lux* for the ſun; and a cauſe for the effect, as *boum labores* for corn. The relation of reſemblance is one plentiful ſource of figures of ſpeech; and nothing is more common than to apply to one object the name of another that reſembles it in any reſpect. Height, ſize, and wordly greatneſs, though in themſelves they have no reſemblance, produce emotions in the mind that have a reſemblance; and, led by this reſemblance, we naturally expreſs worldly greatneſs by height or ſize. One feels a certain uneaſineſs in looking down to a great depth: and hence depth is made to expreſs any thing diſagreeable by exceſs; as *depth* of grief, *depth* of deſpair. Again, height of place and time long paſt, produce ſimilar feelings; and hence the expreſſion

preſſion, *Ut altius repetam.* Diſtance in paſt time, producing a ſtrong feeling, is put for any ſtrong feeling: *Nihil mihi antiquius noſtra amicitia.* Shortneſs with relation to ſpace, for ſhortneſs with relation to time: *Brevis eſſe laboro; obſcurus fio.* Suffering a puniſhment reſembles paying a debt: hence *pendere pœnas.* Upon the ſame account, light may be put for glory, ſun-ſhine for proſperity, and weight for importance.

Many words, originally figurative, having, by long and conſtant uſe, loſt their figurative power, are degraded to the inferior rank of proper terms. Thus the words that expreſs the operations of the mind, have in all languages been originally figurative. The reaſon holds in all, that when theſe operations came firſt under conſideration, there was no other way of deſcribing them but by what they reſembled. It was not practicable to give them proper names, as may be done to objects that can be aſcertained by ſight and touch. A *ſoft* nature, *jarring* tempers, *weight* of wo, *pompous* phraſe, *beget* compaſſion, *aſſuage* grief, *break* a vow, *bend* the eye downward, *ſhower* down

down curſes, *drown'd* in tears, *wrapt* in joy, *warm'd* with eloquence, *loaden* with ſpoils, and a thouſand other expreſſions of the like nature, have loſt their figurative ſenſe. Some terms there are, that cannot be ſaid to be either purely figurative or altogether proper: originally figurative, they are tending to ſimplicity, without having loſt altogether their figurative power. Virgil's *Regina ſaucia cura*, is perhaps one of theſe expreſſions. With ordinary readers, *ſaucia* will be conſidered as expreſſing ſimply the effect of grief; but one of a lively imagination will exalt the phraſe into a figure.

To epitomiſe this ſubject, and at the ſame time to give a clear view of it, I cannot think of a better method, than to preſent to the reader a liſt of the ſeveral relations upon which figures of ſpeech are commonly founded. This liſt I divide into two tables; one of ſubjects expreſſed figuratively, and one of attributes.

FIRST

FIRST TABLE.

Subjects expreſſed figuratively.

1. A word proper to one ſubject employed figuratively to expreſs a reſembling ſubject.

There is no figure of ſpeech ſo frequent, as what is derived from the relation of reſemblance. Youth, for example, is ſignified figuratively by the *morning* of life. The life of a man reſembles a natural day in ſeveral particulars. The morning is the beginning of day, youth the beginning of life: the morning is chearful, ſo is youth; *&c.* By another reſemblance, a bold warrior is termed the *thunderbolt* of war; a multitude of troubles, a *ſea* of troubles.

No other figure of ſpeech poſſeſſes ſo many different beauties, as that which is founded on reſemblance. Beſide the beauties above mentioned, common to all ſorts, it poſſeſſes in particular the beauty of a metaphor or of a ſimile. A figure of ſpeech

built upon reſemblance, ſuggeſts always a compariſon betwixt the principal ſubject and the acceſſory; and by this means every good effect of a metaphor or ſimile, may, in a ſhort and lively manner, be produced by this figure of ſpeech.

2. A word proper to the effect employ'd figuratively to expreſs the cauſe.

Lux for the ſun. *Shadow* for cloud. A helmet is ſignified by the expreſſion *glittering terror*. A tree by *ſhadow* or *umbrage*. Hence the expreſſion,

Nec habet Pelion umbras. *Ovid.*

Where the dun umbrage hangs. *Spring*, *l.* 1023.

A wound is made to ſignify an arrow:

Vulnere non pedibus te conſequar. *Ovid.*

There is a peculiar force and beauty in this figure. The word which ſignifies figuratively the principal ſubject, denotes it to be a cauſe by ſuggeſting the effect.

3. A

3. A word proper to the cauſe, employ'd figuratively to expreſs the effect.

Boumque labores for corn. *Sorrow* or *grief* for tears.

Again Ulyſſes veil'd his penſive head,
Again unmann'd, a ſhow'r of *ſorrow* ſhed.

Streaming *Grief* his faded cheek bedew'd.

Blindneſs for darkneſs:

Cæcis erramus in undis. *Æneid.* iii. 200.

There is a peculiar energy in this figure ſimilar to that in the former. The figurative name denotes the ſubject to be an effect by ſuggeſting its cauſe.

4. Two things being intimately connected, the proper name of the one employ'd figuratively to ſignify the other.

Day for light. *Night* for darkneſs. Hence, A ſudden night. *Winter* for a ſtorm at ſea.

Interea magno miſceri murmure pontum,
Emiſſamque Hyemem ſenſit Neptunus.
Æneid. i. 128.

This laſt figure would be too bold for a Britiſh writer, as a ſtorm at ſea is not inſeparably connected with winter in this climate.

5. A word proper to an attribute employ'd figuratively to denote the ſubject.

Youth and *beauty* for thoſe who are young and beautiful:

Youth and beauty ſhall be laid in duſt.

Majeſty for the King:

What art thou, that uſurp'ſt this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form,
In which the *Majeſty* of buried Denmark
Did ſometime march?
Hamlet, act 1. *ſc.* 1.

——— Or have ye choſen this place,
After the toils of battle, to repoſe
Your weary'd *virtue?*
Paradiſe Loſt.

Verdure

Verdure for a green field. *Summer. l.* 301.

Speaking of cranes:

To pigmy nations wounds and death they bring,
And all the *war* descends upon the wing.
Iliad iii. 10.

Cool *age* advances venerably wise.
Iliad iii. 149.

The peculiar beauty of this figure arises from suggesting an attribute that embellishes the subject, or puts it in a stronger light.

6. A complex term employ'd figuratively to denote one of the component parts.

Funus for a dead body. *Burial* for a grave.

7. The name of one of the component parts instead of the complex term.

Tæda for a marriage. The *East* for a country situated east from us. *Jovis vestigia servat*, for imitating Jupiter in general.

8. A word signifying time or place employ'd

ploy'd figuratively to denote a connected ſubject.

Clime for a nation, or for a conſtitution of government: Hence the expreſſion, *Merciful clime*. *Fleecy winter* for ſnow. *Seculum felix*.

9. A part for the whole.

The *pole* for the earth. The *head* for the perſon.

Triginta minas pro capite tuo dedi. *Plautus.*

Tergum for the man:

Fugiens tergum. *Ovid.*

Vultus for the man:

Jam fulgor armorum fugaces
Terret equos, equitumque vultus. *Horat.*

Quis deſiderio ſit pudor aut modus
Tam chari *capitis?* *Horat.*

Dumque virent *genua*. *Horat.*

Thy

Thy growing virtues juſtify'd my cares,
And promis'd comfort to my *ſilver hairs*.
Iliad ix. 616.

——— Forthwith from the pool he rears
His mighty *ſtature*. *Paradiſe Loſt*.

The ſilent *heart* which grief aſſails. *Parnell*.

The peculiar beauty of this figure conſiſts in marking out that part which makes the greateſt figure.

10. The name of the container employ'd figuratively to ſignify what is contained.

Grove for the birds in it: Vocal *grove*. *Ships* for the ſeamen: Agonizing *ſhips*. *Mountains* for the ſheep paſturing upon them: Bleating *mountains*. *Zacynthus*, *Ithaca*, *&c.* for the inhabitants. *Ex mœſtis domibus*. Livy.

11. The name of the ſuſtainer employ'd figuratively to ſignify what is ſuſtained.

Altar

Altar for the ſacrifice. *Field* for the battle fought upon it: Well-fought *field*.

12. The name of the materials employ'd figuratively to ſignify the things made of them.

Ferrum for *gladius*.

13. The names of the Heathen deities employ'd figuratively to ſignify what they patroniſe.

Jove for the air. *Mars* for war. *Venus* for beauty. *Cupid* for love. *Ceres* for corn. *Neptune* for the ſea. *Vulcan* for fire.

This figure beſtows great elevation upon the ſubject; and therefore ought to be confined to the higher ſtrains of poetry.

SECOND TABLE.

Attributes expreſſed figuratively.

1. When two attributes are connected, the

the name of the one may be employ'd figuratively to expreſs the other.

Purity and virginity are attributes of the ſame perſon. Hence the expreſſion, *Virgin* ſnow for pure ſnow.

2. A word ſignifying properly an attribute of one ſubject, employ'd figuratively to expreſs a reſembling attribute of another ſubject.

Tottering ſtate. *Imperious* ocean. *Angry* flood. *Raging* tempeſt. *Shallow* fears.

My ſure divinity ſhall bear the ſhield,
And edge thy ſword to *reap* the glorious field.
Odyſſey xx. 61.

Black omen, for an omen that portends bad fortune:

Ater odor. *Virgil.*

The peculiar beauty of this figure ariſes from ſuggeſting a compariſon.

3. A word proper to the ſubject, employ'd to expreſs one of its attributes.

Mens for *intellectus*. *Mens* for a reſolution.

Iſtam, oro, exue mentem.

4. When two ſubjects have a reſemblance by a common quality, the name of the one ſubject may be employ'd figuratively to denote that quality in the other.

Summer life for agreeable life.

5. The name of the inſtrument, made to ſignify the power of employing it.

——— Melpomene, cui liquidam pater
Vocem cum *cithara* dedit.

The ample field of figurative expreſſion diſplay'd in theſe tables, affords great ſcope for reaſoning and reflection. Several of the obſervations relating to metaphor, are applicable to figures of ſpeech. Theſe I ſhall

ſhall ſlightly retouch, with ſome additions peculiarly adapted to the preſent ſubject.

In the firſt place, as the figure under conſideration is built upon relation, we find from experience, and it muſt be obvious from reaſon, that the beauty of the figure depends on the intimacy of the relation betwixt the figurative and proper ſenſe of the word. A ſlight reſemblance, in particular, will never make this figure agreeable. The expreſſion, for example, *drink down a ſecret*, for liſtening to a ſecret with attention, is harſh and uncouth, becauſe there is ſcarce any reſemblance betwixt *liſtening* and *drinking*. The expreſſion *weighty crack*, uſed by Ben Johnſon for *loud crack*, is worſe if poſſible: a loud ſound has not the ſlighteſt reſemblance to a piece of matter that is weighty. The following expreſſion of Lucretius is not leſs faulty. "Et "lepido quæ ſunt *fucata* ſonore." i. 645.

——————— Sed magis
Pugnas et exactos tyrannos

Denſum humeris *bibit* aure vulgus.
Horat. Carm. l. 2. *ode* 13.

Phemius! let acts of gods, and heroes old,
What ancient bards in hall and bow'r have told,
Attemper'd to the lyre, your voice employ,
Such the pleas'd *ear will drink* with ſilent joy,
Odyſſey i. 433.

Strepitumque exterritus *hauſit*.
Æneid. vi. 559.

———————Write, my Queen,
And with mine eyes I'll *drink* the words you ſend.
Cymbeline, act 1. *ſc.* 2.

As thus th' effulgence tremulous I *drink*.
Summer, l. 1684.

Neque *audit* currus habenas.
Georg. i. 514.

O Prince! (Lycaon's valiant ſon reply'd)
As thine the ſteeds, be thine the taſk to guide.
The horſes practis'd to their lord's command,
Shall *bear* the rein, and anſwer to thy hand.
Iliad. v. 288.

The following figures of ſpeech ſeem altogether wild and extravagant, the figurative and

and proper meaning having no connection whatever. *Moving* ſoftneſs, freſhneſs *breathes*, *breathing* proſpect, *flowing* ſpring, *dewy* light, *lucid* coolneſs, and many others of this falſe coin may be found in Thomſon's *Seaſons*.

Secondly, the proper ſenſe of the word ought to bear ſome proportion to the figurative ſenſe, and not ſoar much above it, nor ſink much below it. This rule, as well as the foregoing, is finely illuſtrated by Vida:

Hæc adeo cum ſint, cum fas audere poetis
Multa modis multis; tamen obſervare memento,
Si quando haud propriis rem mavis dicere verbis,
Tranſlatiſque aliunde notis, longeque petitis,
Ne nimiam oſtendas, quærendo talia, curam.
Namque aliqui exercent vim duram, et rebus iniqui
Nativam eripiunt formam, indignantibus ipſis,
Invitaſque jubent alienos ſumere vultus.
Haud magis imprudens mihi erit, et luminis expers,
Qui puero ingentes habitus det ferre gigantis,
Quam ſiquis ſtabula alta lares appellet equinos,
Aut crines magnæ genitricis gramina dicat.

Poet. l. iii. 148.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, in a figure of ſpeech, every circumſtance ought to be avoided that agrees with the proper ſenſe only, not the figurative ſenſe; for it is the latter that expreſſes the thought, and the former ſerves for no other purpoſe but to make harmony:

Zacynthus green with ever-ſhady groves,
And Ithaca, preſumptuous boaſt their loves;
Obtruding on my choice a ſecond lord,
They preſs the Hymenean rite abhorr'd.
Odyſſey xix. 152.

Zacynthus here ſtanding figuratively for the inhabitants, the deſcription of the iſland is quite out of place. It puzzles the reader, by making him doubt whether the word ought to be taken in its proper or figurative ſenſe.

——————Write, my Queen,
And with mine eyes I'll drink the words you ſend,
Though ink be made of gall.
Cymbeline, act 1. *ſc.* 2.

The diſguſt one has to drink ink in reality,

is

is nothing to the purpoſe where the ſubject is drinking ink figuratively.

In the fourth place, to draw conſequences from a figure of ſpeech, as if the word were to be underſtood literally, is a groſs abſurdity, for it is confounding truth with fiction :

Be Moubray's ſins ſo heavy in his boſom,
That they may break his foaming courſer's back,
And throw the rider headlong in the liſts,
A caitiff recreant to my couſin Hereford.
Richard II. *act* 1. *ſc.* 3.

Sin may be imagined heavy in a figurative ſenſe : but weight in a proper ſenſe belongs to the acceſſory only ; and therefore to deſcribe the effects of weight, is to deſert the principal ſubject, and to convert the acceſſory into a principal.

Cromwell. How does your Grace?
Wolſey. Why, well;
Never ſo truly happy, my good Cromwell.
I know myſelf now, and I feel within me
A peace above all earthly dignities,

A ſtill and quiet conſcience. The King has cur'd me,
I humbly thank his Grace; and, from theſe ſhoulders,
Theſe ruin'd pillars, out of pity taken
A load would ſink a navy, too much honour.
Henry VIII. *act* 3. *ſc.* 6.

Ulyſſes ſpeaking of Hector:

I wonder now how yonder city ſtands
When we have here the baſe and pillar by us.
Troilus and Creſſida, act 4. *ſc.* 9.

Othello. No, my heart is turn'd to ſtone: I ſtrike it and it hurts my hand.
Othello, act 4. *ſc.* 5.

Not leſs, even in this deſpicable now,
Than when my name fill'd Afric with affrights,
And froze your hearts beneath your torrid zone.
Don Sebaſtian King of Portugal, act 1.

How long a ſpace, ſince firſt I lov'd, it is!
To look into a glaſs I fear,
And am ſurpris'd with wonder, when I miſs
Grey hairs and wrinkles there.
Cowley, vol. 1. *p.* 86.

I choſe the flouriſhing'ſt tree in all the park
With freſheſt boughs, and faireſt head;
I cut my love into his gentle bark,
And in three days behold 'tis dead;
My very written flames ſo violent be,
They've burnt and wither'd up the tree.
Cowley, vol. 1. *p.* 136.

Ah, mighty Love, that it were inward heat
Which made this precious Limbeck ſweat!
But what, alas, ah what does it avail
That ſhe weeps tears ſo wond'rous cold,
As ſcarce the aſſes hoof can hold,
So cold, that I admire they fall not hail.
Cowley, vol. 1. *p.* 132.

Je crains que cette ſaiſon
Ne nous amenne la peſte;
La gueule du chien celeſte
Vomit feu ſur l' horiſon.
A fin que je m'en délivre,
Je veux lire ton gros livre
Juſques au dernier feüillet:
Tout ce que ta plume trace,
Robinet, a de la glace
A faire trembler Juillet. *Maynard.*

In me tota ruens Venus
Cyprum deſeruit.
Horat. Carm. lib. 1. *ode* 19.

Almeria. O Alphonſo, Alphonſo!
Devouring ſeas have waſh'd thee from my ſight,
No time ſhall raſe thee from my memory;
No, I will live to be thy monument:
The cruel ocean is no more thy tomb;
But in my heart thou art interr'd.

Mourning Bride, act 1. *ſc.* 1.

This would be very right, if there were any inconſiſtence in being interred in one place really and in another place figuratively.

From conſidering that a word employ'd in a figurative ſenſe ſuggeſts at the ſame time its proper meaning, a fifth rule occurs, That to raiſe a figure of ſpeech, we ought to uſe no word, the proper ſenſe of which is inconſiſtent or incongruous with the ſubject: for no incongruity, far leſs inconſiſtency, whether real or imagined, ought to enter into the expreſſion of any ſubject:

Interea genitor Tyberini ad fluminis undam
Vulnera *ſiccabat* lymphis ———

Æneid. x. 833.

Tres

Tres adeo incertos cæca caligine *soles*
Erramus pelago, totidem sine sidere noctes.
Æneid. iii. 203.

The foregoing rule may be extended to form a sixth, That no epithet ought to be given to the figurative sense of a word that agrees not also with its proper sense:

————Dicat Opuntiæ
Frater Megillæ, quo *beatus*
Vulnere. *Horat. Carm. lib.* 1. *ode* 27.

Parcus deorum cultor, et infrequens,
Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro.
Horat. Carm. lib. 1. *ode* 34.

Seventhly, The crowding into one period or thought different figures of speech, is not less faulty than crowding metaphors in that manner. The mind is distracted in the quick transition from one image to another, and is puzzled instead of being pleased:

I am of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows.
Hamlet.

My bleeding boſom ſickens at the ſound.
Odyſſ. i. 439.

——————Ah miſer,
Quantâ laboras in *Charybdi !*
Digne puer meliore *flammâ.*
Quæ ſaga, quis te ſolvere Theſſalis
Magus *venenis,* quis poterit deus?
Vix illigatum te triformi
Pegaſus expediet *Chimærâ.*
Horat. Carm. lib. 1. *ode* 27.

Eighthly, If crowding figures be bad, it is ſtill worſe to graft one figure upon another. For inſtance,

While his keen falchion drinks the warriors lives.
Iliad xi. 211.

A falchion drinking the warriors blood is a figure built upon reſemblance, which is paſſable. But then in the expreſſion, *lives* is again put for blood; and by thus grafting one figure upon another the expreſſion is rendered obſcure and unpleaſant.

Ninthly, Intricate and involved figures, that can ſcarce be analized or reduced to plain language, are leaſt of all tolerable:

Votis

Votis incendimus aras. *Æneid.* iii. 279.

——— Onerantque caniſtris
Dona laboratæ Cereris. *Æneid.* viii. 180.

Vulcan to the Cyclopes,

Arma acri facienda viro: nunc viribus uſus,
Nunc manibus rapidis, omni nunc arte magiſtra:
Præcipitate moras. *Æneid.* viii. 441.

——— Huic gladio, perque ærea ſuta
Per tunicam ſqualentem auro, latus *haurit* apertum.
Æneid. x. 313.

Semotique prius tarda neceſſitas
Lethi, corripuit gradum.
Horat. Carm. lib. 1. *ode* 3.

Scribêris Vario fortis, et hoſtium
Victor, Mæonii carminis *alite.*
Horat. Carm. lib. 1. *ode* 6.

Elſe ſhall our fates be number'd with the dead.
Iliad v. 294.

Commutual death the fate of war confounds.
Iliad viii. 85. *and* xi. 117.

Speaking

Speaking of Proteus,

Inſtant he wears, eluſive of the rape,
The mimic force of every ſavage ſhape.
Odyſſ. iv. 563.

Rolling convulſive on the floor, is ſeen
The piteous object of a proſtrate Queen.
Ibid. iv. 952.

The mingling tempeſt waves its gloom.
Autumn, 337.

A various ſweetneſs ſwells the gentle race.
Ibid. 640.

A ſober calm fleeces unbounded ether. *Ibid.* 967.

The diſtant water-fall ſwells in the breeze.
Winter, 738.

In the tenth place, When a ſubject is introduced by its proper name, it is abſurd to attribute to it the properties of a different ſubject to which the word is ſometimes apply'd in a figurative ſenſe:

Hear me, oh Neptune! thou whoſe arms are hurl'd
From ſhore to ſhore, and gird the ſolid world.
Odyſſ. ix. 617.

Neptune

Neptune is here introduced perſonally, and not figuratively for the ocean: the deſcription therefore, which is only applicable to the ocean, is altogether improper.

It is not ſufficient, that a figure of ſpeech be regularly conſtructed, and be free from blemiſh: it requires taſte to diſcern when it is proper when improper; and taſte, I ſuſpect, is the only guide we can rely on. One however may gather from reflection and experience, that ornaments and graces ſuit not any of the diſpiriting paſſions, nor are proper for expreſſing any thing grave and important. In familiar converſation, they are in ſome meaſure ridiculous. Proſpero in the *Tempeſt*, ſpeaking to his daughter Miranda, ſays,

The fringed curtains of thine eyes advance,
And ſay what thou ſeeſt yond.

No exception can be taken to the juſtneſs of the figure; and circumſtances may be imagined to make it proper: but it is certainly not proper in familiar converſation.

In

In the laſt place, though figures of ſpeech have a charming effect when accurately conſtructed and properly introduced, they ought however to be ſcattered with a ſparing hand: nothing is more luſcious, and nothing conſequently more ſatiating, than redundant ornament of any kind.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

Narration and Deſcription.

HORACE, and many writers after him, give inſtructions for chuſing a ſubject adapted to the genius of the author. But rules of criticiſm would be endleſs, did one deſcend to peculiarities in talent or genius. The aim of the preſent work is, to conſider human nature in general, and to explore what is common to the ſpecies. The choice of a ſubject comes not under ſuch a plan: but the manner of execution comes under it; becauſe the manner of execution is ſubjected to general rules Theſe rules reſpect the things expreſſed, as well as the language or expreſſion; which ſuggeſts a diviſion of the preſent chapter into two parts; firſt of thoughts, and next of words. I pretend not to juſtify this diviſion as entirely accurate. In diſcourſing

of the thoughts, it is difficult to abſtract altogether from words; and ſtill more difficult, in diſcourſing of the words, to abſtract altogether from thought.

The firſt obſervation is, That the thoughts which embelliſh a narration ought to be chaſte and ſolid. While the mind is intent upon facts, it is little diſpoſed to the operarations of the imagination. Poetical images in a grave hiſtory are intolerable; and yet Strada's Belgic hiſtory is full of poetical images. Theſe being diſcordant with the ſubject, are diſguſtful; and they have a ſtill worſe effect, by giving an air of fiction to a genuine hiſtory. Such flowers ought to be ſcattered with a ſparing hand, even in epic poetry; and at no rate are they proper, till the reader be warmed, and by an enlivened imagination be prepared to reliſh them: in that ſtate of mind, they are extremely agreeable. But while we are ſedate and attentive to an hiſtorical chain of facts, we reject with diſdain every fiction. This Belgic hiſtory is indeed wofully vicious both in matter and form: it is ſtuffed with frigid

frigid and unmeaning reflections, as well as with poetical flaſhes, which, even laying aſide the impropriety, are mere tinſel.

Vida *, following Horace, recommends a modeſt commencement of an epic poem; giving for a reaſon, that the writer ought to huſband his fire. This reaſon has weight; but what is ſaid above ſuggeſts a reaſon ſtill more weighty: Bold thoughts and figures are never reliſhed till the mind be heated and thoroughly engaged, which is not the reader's caſe at the commencement. Shakeſpear, in the firſt part of his hiſtory of Henry VI. begins with a ſentiment too bold for the moſt heated imagination:

Bedford. Hung be the heav'ns with black, yield day to night!
Comets, importing change of times and ſtates,
Brandiſh your cryſtal treſſes in the ſky,
And with them ſcourge the bad revolting ſtars,
That have conſented unto Henry's death!

* Poet. lib. 2. l. 30.

Henry the Fifth, too famous to live long!
England ne'er loſt a king of ſo much worth.

The paſſage with which Strada begins his hiſtory, is too poetical for a ſubject of that kind; and at any rate too high for the beginning of a grave performance. A third reaſon ought to have not leſs influence than either of the former: A man who, upon his firſt appearance, endeavours to exhibit all his talents, is never reliſhed; the firſt periods of a work ought therefore to be ſhort, natural, and ſimple. Cicero, in his oration *pro Archia poeta*, errs againſt this rule: his reader is out of breath at the very firſt period, which ſeems never to end. Burnet begins the hiſtory of his own times with a period long and intricate.

A third rule or obſervation is, That where the ſubject is intended for entertainment ſolely, not for inſtruction, a thing ought to be deſcribed as it appears, not as it is in reality. In running, for example, the impulſe upon the ground is accurately proportioned to the celerity of motion: in appearance

pearance it is otherwiſe; for a perſon in ſwift motion ſeems to ſkim the ground, and ſcarcely to touch it. Virgil, with great taſte, deſcribes quick running according to its appearance; and thereby raiſes an image far more lively, than it could have been by adhering ſcrupulouſly to truth:

Hos ſuper advenit Volſca de gente Camilla,
Agmen agens equitum et florentes ære catervas,
Bellatrix: non illa colo calathiſve Minervæ
Fœmineas aſſueta manus; ſed prælia virgo
Dura pati, curſuque pedum prævertere ventos.
Illa vel intactæ ſegetis per ſumma volaret
Gramina: nec teneras curſu læſiſſet ariſtas:
Vel mare per medium, fluctu ſuſpenſa tumenti,
Ferret iter; celeres nec tingeret æquore plantas.
Æneid vii. 803.

This example is copied by the author of *Telemachus:*

Les Brutiens ſont legeres à la courſe comme les cerfs, et comme les daims. On croiroit que l'herbe même la plus tendre n'eſt point foulée ſous leurs pieds; à peine laiſſent ils dans le ſable quelques traces de leurs pas. *Liv.* 10.

Again,

Again,

Déja il avoit abattu Euſilas ſi léger à la courſe, qu'à peine il imprimoit la trace de ſes pas dans le ſable, et qui devançoit dans ſon pays les plus rapides flots de l' Eurotas et de l' Alphée.

Liv. 20.

Fourthly, In narration as well as in deſcription, facts and objects ought to be painted ſo accurately as to form in the mind of the reader diſtinct and lively images. Every uſeleſs circumſtance ought indeed to be ſuppreſſed, becauſe every ſuch circumſtance loads the narration; but if a circumſtance be neceſſary, however ſlight, it cannot be deſcribed too minutely. The force of language conſiſts in raiſing complete images*; which cannot be done till the reader, forgetting himſelf, be tranſported as by magic into the very place and time of the important action, and be converted, as it were, into a real ſpectator, beholding every thing that paſſes. In this view, the narrative in an epic poem ought to rival a picture

* Part 1. ſect. 6.

in

in the livelineſs and accuracy of its repreſentations: no circumſtance muſt be omitted that tends to make a complete image; becauſe an imperfect image, as well as any other imperfect conception, is cold and uninterreſting. I ſhall illuſtrate this rule by ſeveral examples, giving the firſt place to a beautiful paſſage from Virgil.

Qualis *populeâ* mœrens Philomela ſub umbrâ
Amiſſos queritur fœtus, quos durus *arator*
Obſervans nido *implumes* detraxit.
Georg. lib. 4. *l.* 511.

The poplar, plowman, and unfledged, though not eſſential in the deſcription, are circumſtances that tend to make a complete image, and upon that account are an embelliſhment.

Again,

Hic viridem Æneas *frondenti ex ilice* metam
Conſtituit, ſignum nautis.
Æneid. v. 129.

Horace,

Horace, addreſſing to Fortune:

Te pauper ambit ſollicita prece
Ruris colonus: te dominam æquoris,
Quicumque Bithynâ laceſſit
Carpathium pelagus carinâ.

Carm. lib. 1. *ode* 35.

——— Illum ex mœnibus hoſticis
Matrona bellantis tyranni
Proſpiciens, et adulta virgo,
Suſpiret: Eheu, ne rudis agminum
Sponſus laceſſat regius aſperum
Tactu leonem, quem cruenta
Per medias rapit ira cædes.

Carm. lib. 3. *ode* 2.

Shakeſpear ſays *, "You may as well go "about to turn the ſun to ice by fanning "in his face with a *peacock*'s father." The peacock's feather, not to mention the beauty of the object, completes the image. An accurate image cannot be formed of this fanciful operation, without conceiving a particular feather; and the mind is at ſome loſs, when this is not ſpecified in the de-

* Henry V. act 4. ſc. 4.

ſcription.

ſcription. Again, " The rogues ſlighted " me into the river with as little remorſe, " as they would have drown'd a bitch's " blind puppies, fifteen i' th' litter *."

Old Lady. You would not be a queen?
Anne. No not for all the riches under heaven.
Old Lady. 'Tis ſtrange: a three-pence bow'd would hire me, old as I am, to queen it.
Henry VIII. *act* 2. *ſc.* 5.

In the following paſſage, the action, with all its material circumſtances, is repreſented ſo much to the life, that it could not be better conceived by a real ſpectator; and it is this manner of deſcription which contributes greatly to the ſublimity of the paſſage.

He ſpake; and to confirm his words, out flew
Millions of flaming ſwords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty cherubim: the ſudden blaze
Far round illumin'd hell: highly they rag'd
Againſt the Higheſt, and fierce with graſped arms,

* Merry Wives of Windſor, act 3. ſc. 15.

Claſh'd on their ſounding ſhields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of heav'n.
Milton, b. 1.

A paſſage I am to cite from Shakeſpear, falls not much ſhort of that now mentioned in particularity of deſcription:

O you hard hearts! you cruel men of Rome!
Knew you not Pompey? Many a time and oft
Have you climb'd up to walls and battlements,
To towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops,
Your infants in your arms; and there have ſat
The live-long day with patient expectation
To ſee great Pompey paſs the ſtreets of Rome.
And when you ſaw his chariot but appear,
Have you not made an univerſal ſhout,
That Tyber trembled underneath his banks,
To hear the replication of your ſounds,
Made in his concave ſhores?
Julius Cæſar, act 1. *ſc.* 1.

The *Henriade* of Voltaire errs greatly againſt the foregoing rule: every thing is touched in a ſummary way, without ever deſcending to the circumſtances of an event. This manner is good in a general hiſtory, the

the purpoſe of which is to record important tranſactions: but in a fable, which hath a very different aim, it is cold and unintereſting; becauſe it is impracticable to form diſtinct images of perſons or things repreſented in a manner ſo ſuperficial.

It is obſerved above, that every uſeleſs circumſtance ought to be ſuppreſſed. To deal in ſuch circumſtances, is a fault, on the one hand, not leſs to be avoided, than the conciſeneſs for which Voltaire is blamed, on the other. In the *Æneid**, Barce, the nurſe of Sichæus, whom we never hear of before or after, is introduced for a purpoſe not more important than to call Anna to her ſiſter Dido. And that it might not be thought unjuſt in Dido, even in this trivial incident, to prefer her huſband's nurſe before her own, the poet takes care to inform his reader, that Dido's nurſe was dead. To this I muſt oppoſe a beautiful paſſage in the ſame book, where, after Dido's laſt ſpeech, the poet, ſuppoſing her

* Lib. 4. l. 632.

dead, haſtens to deſcribe the lamentation of her attendants:

Dixerat: atque illam media inter talia ferro
Collapſam aſpiciunt comites, enſemque cruore
Spumantem, ſparſaſque manus. It clamor ad alta
Atria, concuſſam bacchatur fama per urbem;
Lamentis gemituque et fœmineo ululatu
Tecta fremunt, reſonat magnis plangoribus æther.
Lib. 4. *l.* 663.

As an appendix to the foregoing rule, I add the following obſervation, That to raiſe a ſudden and ſtrong impreſſion, ſome ſingle circumſtance happily ſelected, has more power than the moſt laboured deſcription. Macbeth, mentioning to his lady ſome voices he heard while he was murdering the King, ſays,

There's one did laugh in's ſleep, and one cry'd
Murder!
They wak'd each other; and I ſtood and heard
them;
But they did ſay their prayers, and addreſs them
Again to ſleep.
Lady. There are two lodg'd together.
Macbeth.

Macbeth. One cry'd, God bleſs us! and, Amen! the other;
As they had ſeen me with theſe hangman's hands.
Liſtening their fear, I could not ſay, Amen,
When they did ſay, God bleſs us.
Lady. Conſider it not ſo deeply.
Macbeth. But wherefore could not I pronounce, Amen?
I had moſt need of bleſſing, and Amen
Stuck in my throat.
Lady. Theſe deeds muſt not be thought
After theſe ways; ſo, it will make us mad.
Macbeth. Methought, I heard a voice cry, Sleep no more!
Macbeth doth murder ſleep, *&c.*

Act 2. *ſc.* 3.

Deſcribing Prince Henry:

I ſaw young Harry, with his beaver on,
His cuiſſes on his thighs, gallantly arm'd,
Riſe from the ground like feather'd Mercury;
And vaulted with ſuch eaſe into his ſeat,
As if an angel dropt down from the clouds,
To turn and wind a fiery Pegaſus,
And witch the world with noble horſemanſhip.

Firſt Part Henry IV. *act* 4. *ſc.* 2.

King

King Henry. Lord Cardinal, if thou think'ſt on heaven's bliſs,
Hold up thy hand, make ſignal of thy hope.
He dies, and makes no ſign!
Second Part Henry VI. *act* 3. *ſc.* 10.

The ſame author, ſpeaking ludicrouſly of an army debilitated with diſeaſes, ſays,

Half of them dare not ſhake the ſnow from off their caſſocks, leſt they ſhake themſelves to pieces.

To draw a character is the maſter-ſtroke of deſcription. In this Tacitus excels: his figures are natural, diſtinct, and complete; not a feature wanting or miſplaced. Shakeſpear however exceeds Tacitus in the ſprightlineſs of his figures: ſome characteriſtical circumſtance is generally invented or laid hold of, which paints more to the life than many words. The following inſtances will explain my meaning, and at the ſame time prove my obſervation to be juſt.

Why ſhould a man, whoſe blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandſire cut in alabaſter?
Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice,
By being peeviſh? I tell that what, Anthonio,

(I

(I love thee, and it is my love that ſpeaks):
There are a ſort of men, whoſe viſages
Do cream and mantle like a ſtanding pond;
And do a wilful ſtillneſs entertain,
With purpoſe to be dreſs'd in an opinion
Of wiſdom, gravity, profound conceit;
As who ſhould ſay, I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!
O my Anthonio, I do know of thoſe,
That therefore only are reputed wiſe,
For ſaying nothing.

Merchant of Venice, act 1. *ſc.* 1.

Again,

Gratiano ſpeaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice: his reaſons are two grains of wheat hid in two buſhels of chaff; you ſhall ſeek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the ſearch.

Ibid.

In the following paſſage a character is completed by a ſingle ſtroke.

Shallow. O the mad days that I have ſpent; and to ſee how many of mine old acquaintance are dead.

Silence. We ſhall all follow, Couſin.

Shallow. Certain, 'tis certain, very ſure, very ſure;

ſure; Death (as the Pſalmiſt ſaith) is certain to all: all ſhall die. How a good yoke of bullocks at Stamford fair?

Slender. Truly, Couſin, I was not there.

Shallow. Death is certain. Is old *Double* of your town living yet.

Silence. Dead, Sir.

Shallow. Dead! ſee, ſee; he drew a good bow: and dead? He ſhot a fine ſhoot. How a ſcore of ewes now?

Silence. Thereafter as they be. A ſcore of good ewes may be worth ten pounds.

Shallow. And is old *Double* dead?

Second Part Henry IV. *act* 3. *ſc.* 3.

Deſcribing a jealous huſband:

Neither preſs, coffer, cheſt, trunk, well, vault, but he hath an abſtract for the remembrance of ſuch places, and goes to them by his note. There is no hiding you in the houſe.

Merry Wives of Windſor, act 4. *ſc.* 3.

Congreve has an inimitable ſtroke of this kind in his comedy of *Love for Love:*

Ben Legend. Well, father, and how do all at home? how does brother Dick, and brother Val?

Sir Sampſon. Dick, body o' me, Dick has been dead

dead theſe two years, I writ you word, when you were at Leghorn.

Ben. Meſs, that's true; marry, I had forgot. Dick's dead, as you ſay. *Act* 3. *ſc.* 6.

Falſtaff ſpeaking of Ancient Piſtol,

He's no ſwaggerer, hoſteſs; a tame cheater i'faith; you may ſtroak him as gently as a puppey-greyhound; he will not ſwagger with a Barbary hen, if her feathers turn back in any ſhew of reſiſtence.

Second Part Henry IV. *act* 2. *ſc.* 9.

Some writers, through heat of imagination, fall into contradictions; ſome are guilty of downright inconſiſtencies; and ſome even rave like madmen. Againſt ſuch capital errors one cannot be warned to better purpoſe than by collecting inſtances. The firſt ſhall be of a contradiction, the moſt venial of all. Virgil ſpeaking of Neptune:

Interea magno miſceri murmure pontum
Emiſſamque hyemem ſenſit Neptunus, et imis
Stagna refuſa vadis: *graviter commotus*, et alto
Proſpiciens, ſummâ *placidum* caput extulit undâ.

Æneid. i. 128.

Again,

When firſt young Maro, in his boundleſs mind,
A work t'outlaſt immortal Rome deſign'd.
Eſſay on Criticiſm, l. 130.

The following examples are of downright inconſiſtencies.

Alii pulſis e tormento catenis diſcerpti ſectique, dimidiato corpore pugnabant ſibi ſuperſtites, ac peremptæ partis ultores. *Strada, Dec.* 2. *L.* 2.

Il povér huomo, che non ſen' era accorto,
Andava combattendo, ed era morto. *Berni.*

He fled, but flying, left his life behind.
Iliad xi. 443.

Full through his neck the weighty falchion ſped:
Along the pavement roll'd the mutt'ring head.
Odyſſey xxii. 365.

The laſt article is of raving like one mad. Cleopatra ſpeaking to the aſpick:

——————Welcome, thou kind deceiver,
Thou beſt of thieves; who, with an eaſy key,
Do'ſt open life, and unperceiv'd by us
Ev'n ſteal us from ourſelves; diſcharging ſo
Death's

Death's dreadful office, better than himſelf,
Touching our limbs ſo gently into ſlumber,
That Death ſtands by, deceiv'd by his own image,
And thinks himſelf but Sleep.

Dryden, All for Love, act 5.

Reaſons that are common and known to every perſon, ought to be taken for granted: to expreſs them is childiſh and interrupts the narration. Quintus Curtius, relating the battle of Iſſus:

Jam in conſpectu, ſed extra teli jactum, utraque acies erat; quum priores Perſæ inconditum et trucem ſuſtulere clamorem. Redditur et a Macedonibus major, exercitus impar numero, ſed jugis montium vaſtiſque ſaltibus repercuſſus: *quippe ſemper circumjecta nemora petræque, quantamcumque accepere vocem, multiplicato ſono referunt.*

Having diſcuſſed what obſervations occurred upon the thoughts or things expreſſed, I proceed to what more peculiarly concern the language or verbal dreſs. The language proper for expreſſing paſſion is the ſubject of a former chapter. Several obſervations there made, are applicable to the preſent ſubject; particularly, That words are

intimately connected with the ideas they repreſent, and that the repreſentation cannot be perfect unleſs the emotions raiſed by the ſound and the ſenſe be concordant. It is not ſufficient, that the ſenſe be clearly expreſſed: the words muſt correſpond to the ſubject in every particular. An elevated ſubject requires an elevated ſtyle: what is familiar, ought to be familiarly expreſſed: a ſubject that is ſerious and important, ought to be cloathed in plain nervous language: a deſcription, on the other hand, addreſſed to the imagination, is ſuſceptible of the higheſt ornaments that ſounding words, metaphor, and figurative expreſſion, can beſtow upon it.

I ſhall give a few examples of the foregoing doctrine. A poet of any genius will not readily dreſs a high ſubject in low words; and yet blemiſhes of this kind are found even in ſome claſſical works. Horace obſerving that men, perfectly ſatisfied with themſelves, are ſeldom ſo with their condition, introduces Jupiter indulging to each his own choice:

Jam

Jam faciam quod vultis: eris tu, qui modo miles,
Mercator: tu, conſultus modo, ruſticus: hinc vos,
Vos hinc mutatis diſcedite partibus: eia,
Quid? ſtatis? nolint: atqui licet eſſe beatis.
Quid cauſæ eſt, merito quin illis Jupiter ambas
Iratus buccas inflet? neque ſe fore poſthac
Tam facilem dicat, votis ut præbeat aurem?

Serm. lib. 1. *ſat.* 1. *l.* 16.

Jupiter in wrath puffing up both cheeks, is a ludicrous expreſſion, far from ſuitable to the gravity of the ſubject: every one muſt feel the diſcordance. The following couplet, ſinking far below the ſubject, is not leſs ludicrous.

Not one looks backward, onward ſtill he goes,
Yet ne'er looks forward farther than his noſe.

Eſſay on Man, ep. iv. 223.

On the other hand, to raiſe the expreſſion above the tone of the ſubject, is a fault than which none is more common. Take the following inſtances.

Orcan le plus fidéle à ſerver ſes deſſeins,
Né ſous le ciel brûlant des plus noirs Affricains.

Bajazet, act 3. *ſc.* 8.

Les

Les ombres par trois fois ont obſcurci les cieux
Depuis que le ſommeil n'eſt entré dans vos yeux ;
Et le jour a trois fois chaſſé la nuit obſcure
Depuis que votre corps languit ſans nourriture.
Phedra, act 1. *ſc.* 3.

Aſſuerus. Ce mortel, qui montra tant de zéle pour moi,
Vit-il encore ?
Aſaph. ———Il voit l'aſtre qui vous éclaire.
Eſther, act 2. *ſc.* 3.

Oui, c'eſt Agamemnon, c'eſt ton Roi qui t'eveille;
Viens, reconnois la voix qui frape ton oreille.
Iphigenie.

———In the inner room
I ſpy a winking lamp, that weakly ſtrikes
The ambient air, ſcarce kindling into light.
Southerne, Fate of Capua, act 3.

In the funeral orations of the Biſhop of Meaux, the following paſſages are raiſed far above the tone of the ſubject.

L'Ocean etonné de ſe voir traverſé tant de fois en des appareils ſi divers, et pour des cauſes ſi differentes, *&c.* *p.* 6.

Grande

Grande Reine, je ſatisfais à vos plus tendres deſirs, quand je célébre ce monarque; et ce cœur qui n'a jamais vêcu que pour lui, ſe eveille, tout poudre qu'il eſt, et devient ſenſible, même ſous ce drap mortuaire, au nom d'un epoux ſi cher. *p.* 32.

Monteſquieu, in a didactic work, *L'eſprit des Loix*, gives too great indulgence to imagination: the tone of his language ſwells frequently above his ſubject. I give an example:

Mr le Comte de Boulainvilliers et Mr l' Abbé Dubos ont fait chacun un ſyſteme, dont l'un ſemble être une conjuration contre le tiers-etat, et l'autre une conjuration contre la nobleſſe. Lorſque le Soleil donna à Phaéton ſon char à conduire, il lui dit: Si vous montez trop haut, vous brulerez la demeure céleſte; ſi vous deſcendez trop bas, vous réduirez en cendres la terre: n'allez point trop a droite, vous tomberiez dans la conſtellation du ſerpent; n'allez point trop à gauche, vous iriez dans celle de l'autel: tenez-vous entre les deux.

L. ch. 10.

The following paſſage, intended, one would imagine, as a receipt to boil water, is altogether

gether burleſque by the laboured elevation of the diction.

A maſſy caldron of ſtupendous frame
They brought, and plac'd it o'er the riſing flame:
Then heap the lighted wood; the flame divides
Beneath the vaſe, and climbs around the ſides:
In its wide womb they pour the ruſhing ſtream:
The boiling water bubbles to the brim.

Pope's Homer, book xviii. 405.

In a paſſage near the beginning of the 4th book of Telamachus, one feels a ſudden bound upward without preparation, which accords not with the ſubject:

Calypſo, qui avoit été juſqu' à ce moment immobile et tranſportée de plaiſir en écoutant les avantures de Télémaque, l'interrompit pour lui faire prendre quelque repos. Il eſt tems, lui dit-elle, que vous alliez goûter la douceur du ſommeil aprés tant de travaux. Vous n'avez rien à craindre ici; tout vous eſt favorable. Abandonnez-vous donc à la joye. Goûtez la paix, et tous les autres dons des dieux dont vous allez être comblé. Demain, *quand l' Aurore avec ſes doigts de roſes entr'ouvrira les portes dorées de l' Orient, et que les chevaux du ſoleil ſortans de l'onde amére répandront les flames*

du

du jour, pour chaſſer devant eux toutes les etoiles du ciel, nous reprendrons, mon cher Télémaque, l'hiſtoire de vos malheurs.

This obviouſly is copied from a ſimilar paſſage in the Æneid, which ought not to have been copied, becauſe it lies open to the ſame cenſure: but the force of authority is great.

At regina gravi jamdudum ſaucia cura,
Vulnus alit venis, & cæco carpitur igni.
Multa viri virtus animo, multuſque recurſat
Gentis honos: hærent infixi pectore vultus,
Verbaque: nec placidam membris dat cura quietem.
Poſtera Phœbea luſtrabat lampade terras,
Humentemque Aurora polo dimoverat umbram;
Cum ſic unanimem alloquitur maleſana ſororem:
Lib. iv. 1.

Take another example where the words riſe above the ſubject:

Ainſi les peuples y accoururent bientôt en foule de toutes parts; le commerce de cette ville étoit ſemblable au flux et reflux de la mer. Les tréſors y entroient comme les flots viennent l'un ſur l'autre. Tout y etoit apporté et en ſortoit librement: tout

ce qui y entroit, étoit utile; toute ce qui en sortoit, laissoit en sortant d'autres richesses en sa place. La justice sevére presidoit dans le port au milieu de tant de nations. La franchise, la bonne foi, la candeur, sembloient du haut de ces superbs tours appeller les marchands des terres les plus éloignées: chacun des ces marchands, *soit qu'il vînt des rives orientales où le soleil sort chaque jour du sein des ondes, soit qu'il fût parti de cette grande mer où le soleil lassé de son cours va eteindre ses feux,* vivoit plaisible et en sureté dans Salente comme dans sa patrie! *Telemaque, l.* 12.

The language of Homer is suited to his subject, not less accurately than the actions and sentiments of his heroes are to their characters. Virgil, in this particular, falls short of perfection: his language is stately throughout; and though he descends at times to the simplest branches of cookery, roasting and boiling for example, yet he never relaxes a moment from the high tone *. In adjusting his language to his subject, no writer equals Swift. I can recollect but one exception, which at the same time is far

* See Æneid. lib. i. 188.—219.

from

from being groſs. The journal of a modern lady, is compoſed in a ſtyle where ſprightlineſs is blended with familiarity, perfectly ſuited to the ſubject. In one paſſage, however, the poet aſſumes a higher tone, which correſponds neither to the ſubject nor to the tone of language employ'd in the reſt of that piece. The paſſage I have in view begins *l.* 116. "But let me now a "while ſurvey," *&c.* and ends at *l.* 135.

It is proper to be obſerved upon this head, that writers of inferior rank are continually upon the ſtretch to enliven and enforce their ſubject by exaggeration and ſuperlatives. This unluckily has an effect oppoſite to what is intended: the reader, diſguſted with language that ſwells above the ſubject, is led by contraſt to think more meanly of the ſubject than it may poſſibly deſerve. A man of prudence, beſide, will be not leſs careful to huſband his ſtrength in writing than in walking: a writer too liberal of ſuperlatives, exhauſts his whole ſtock upon ordinary incidents, and reſerves no ſhare to

expreſs, with greater energy, matters of importance *.

The power that language poſſeſſes to imitate thought, goes farther than to the capital circumſtances above mentioned: it reacheth even the ſlighter modifications. Slow action, for example, is imitated by words pronounced ſlow; labour or toil, by words harſh or rough in their ſound. But this ſubject has been already handled †.

In dialogue-writing, the condition of the ſpeaker is chiefly to be regarded in framing the expreſſion. The centinel in *Hamlet*, interrogated about the ghoſt, whether his watch had been quiet? anſwers with great

* Montaigne, reflecting upon the then preſent modes, obſerves, that there never was at any other time ſo abject and ſervile proſtitution of words in the addreſſes made by people of faſhion to one another; the humbleſt tenders of life and ſoul, no profeſſions under that of devotion and adoration; the writer conſtantly declaring himſelf a vaſſal, nay a ſlave: ſo that when any more ſerious occaſion of friendſhip or gratitude requires more genuine profeſſions, words are wanting to expreſs them.

† Ch. 18. ſect. 3.

propriety

propriety for a man in his ſtation, "Not a "mouſe ſtirring *."

I proceed to a ſecond remark, not leſs important than the former. No perſon of reflection but muſt be ſenſible, that an incident makes a ſtronger impreſſion on an eye-witneſs, than when heard at ſecond hand. Writers of genius, ſenſible that the eye is the beſt avenue to the heart, repreſent every thing as paſſing in our ſight; and from readers or hearers, transform us, as it were, into ſpectators. A ſkilful writer conceals himſelf, and preſents his perſonages. In a word, every thing becomes dramatic as much as poſſible. Plutarch, *de gloria Athenienſium*, obſerves, that Thucydides makes his reader a ſpectator, and inſpires him with the ſame paſſions as if he were an eye-witneſs. I am intitled to

* One can ſcarce avoid ſmiling at the blindneſs of a certain critic, who, with an air of ſelf-ſufficiency, condemns this expreſſion as low and vulgar. A French poet, ſays he, would expreſs the ſame thought in a more ſublime manner: "Mais tout dort, et l'armée, et les vents, et Neptune." And he adds, "The Engliſh poet may pleaſe at London, but "the French every where elſe."

make

make the ſame obſervation upon our countryman Swift. From this happy talent ariſes that energy of ſtyle which is peculiar to him: he cannot always avoid narration; but the pencil is his choice, by which he beſtows life and colouring upon his objects. Pope is richer in ornament, but poſſeſſes not in the ſame degree the talent of drawing from the life. A tranſlation of the ſixth ſatire of Horace, begun by the former and finiſhed by the latter, affords the faireſt opportunity for a compariſon. Pope obviouſly imitates the pictureſque manner of his friend: yet every one of taſte muſt be ſenſible, that the imitation, though fine, falls ſhort of the original. In other inſtances, where Pope writes in his own ſtyle, the difference of manner is ſtill more conſpicuous.

Abſtract or general terms have no good effect in any compoſition for amuſement; becauſe it is only of particular objects that images can be formed *. Shakeſpear's ſtyle in that reſpect is excellent. Every article

* See chap. 4.

in

in his deſcriptions is particular, as in nature; and if accidentally a vague expreſſion ſlip in, the blemiſh is extremely diſcernible by the bluntneſs of its impreſſion. Take the following example. Falſtaff, excuſing himſelf for running away at a robbery, ſays,

By the Lord, I knew ye, as well as he that made ye. Why, hear ye, my maſters; was it for me to kill the heir-apparent? ſhould I turn upon the true prince? Why, thou knoweſt, I am as valiant as Hercules; but beware inſtinct, the lion will not touch the true prince: inſtinct is a great matter. I was a coward on inſtinct: I ſhall think the better of myſelf, and thee, during my life; I, for a valiant lion, and thou for a true prince. But, by the Lord, lads, I am glad you have the money. Hoſteſs, clap to the doors; watch to-night, pray to-morrow. Gallants, lads, boys, hearts of gold, all the titles of good fellowſhip come to you! What, ſhall we be merry? ſhall we have a play *extempore?*

Firſt Part Henry IV. *act* 2. *ſc.* 9.

The particular words I object to are, *inſtinct is a great matter*, which make but a poor figure, compared with the livelineſs of

of the reſt of the ſpeech. It was one of Homer's advantages, that he wrote before general terms were multiplied: the ſuperior genius of Shakeſpear diſplays itſelf in avoiding them after they were multiplied. Addiſon deſcribes the family of Sir Roger de Coverley in the following words.

> You would take his valet de chambre for his brother, his butler is gray-headed, his groom is one of the graveſt men that I have ever ſeen, and his coachman has the looks of a privy counſellor.
>
> *Speciator*, N° 106.

The deſcription of the groom is leſs lively than of the others; plainly becauſe the expreſſion, being vague and general, tends not to form any image. "Dives opum "variarum *," is an expreſſion ſtill more vague; and ſo are the following.

> ——— Mæcenas, mearum
> Grande decus, columenque rerum.
>
> *Horat. Carm. l. 2. ode 17.*

* Georg. l. ii. 468.

—et

——————— et fide Teîa
Dices laborantes in uno
Penelopen, vitreamque Circen.
Horat. Carm. l. 1. *ode* 17.

In the fine arts, it is a rule, to put the capital objects in the ſtrongeſt point of view; and even to preſent them oftener than once, where it can be done. In hiſtory-painting, the principal figure is placed in the front, and in the beſt light: an equeſtrian ſtatue is placed in a centre of ſtreets, that it may be ſeen from many places at once. In no compoſition is there a greater opportunity for this rule than in writing:

——————— Sequitur pulcherrimus Aſtur,
Aſtur equo fidens et verſicoloribus armis.
Æneid. x. 180.

——————— Full many a lady
I've ey'd with beſt regard, and many a time
Th' harmony of their tongues hath into bondage
Brought my too diligent ear, for ſeveral virtues
Have I lik'd ſeveral women, never any
With ſo full ſoul, but ſome defect in her
Did quarrel with the nobleſt grace ſhe ow'd,

And put it to the foil. But you, O you,
So perfect, and ſo peerleſs, are created
Of every creature's beſt.

The Tempeſt, act 3. ſc. 1.

With thee converſing I forget all time;
All ſeaſons and their change, all pleaſe alike.
Sweet is the breath of morn, her riſing ſweet,
With charm of earlieſt birds; pleaſant the ſun
When firſt on this delightful land he ſpreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flow'r,
Gliſtering with dew; fragrant the fertil earth
After ſoft ſhowers; and ſweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild, the ſilent night
With this her ſolemn bird, and this fair moon,
And theſe the gems of heav'n, her ſtarry train:
But neither breath of morn, when ſhe aſcends
With charm of earlieſt birds, nor riſing ſun
On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, flower,
Gliſtering with dew, nor fragrance after ſhowers,
Nor grateful evening mild, nor ſilent night,
With this her ſolemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glittering ſtar-light, without thee is ſweet.

Paradiſe Loſt, book 4. l. 634.

What mean ye, that ye uſe this proverb, The fathers have eaten ſour grapes, and the childrens teeth are ſet on edge? As I live, ſaith the Lord God,

God, ye ſhall not have occaſion to uſe this proverb in Iſrael. If a man keep my judgements to deal truly, he is juſt, he ſhall ſurely live. But if he be a robber, a ſhedder of blood; if he have eaten upon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife; if he have oppreſſed the poor and needy, have ſpoiled by violence, have not reſtored the pledge, have lift up his eyes to idols, have given forth upon uſury, and have taken increaſe: ſhall he live? he ſhall not live: he ſhall ſurely die; and his blood ſhall be upon him. Now, lo, if he beget a ſon, that ſeeth all his father's ſins, and conſidereth, and doth not ſuch like; that hath not eaten upon the mountains, hath not lift up his eyes to idols, nor defiled his neighbour's wife, hath not oppreſſed any nor with-held the pledge, neither hath ſpoiled by violence, but hath given his bread to the hungry, and covered the naked with a garment; that hath not received uſury nor increaſe, that hath executed my judgments, and walked in my ſtatutes; he ſhall not die for the iniquity of his father; he ſhall ſurely live. The ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die: the ſon ſhall not bear the iniquity of the father; neither ſhall the father bear the iniquity of the ſon; the righteouſneſs of the righteous ſhall be upon him, and the wickedneſs of the wicked ſhall be upon him. Have I any pleaſure that the wicked ſhould die? ſaith the Lord

God; and not that he ſhould return from his ways and live. *Ezekiel* xviii.

The repetitions in Homer, which are frequent, have been the occaſion of much criticiſm. Suppoſe we were at a loſs about the reaſon, might not taſte be ſufficient to juſtify them? At the ſame time, one muſt be devoid of underſtanding not to be ſenſible, that they make the narration dramatic; and give an air of truth, by making things appear as paſſing in our ſight.

A conciſe comprehenſive ſtyle is a great ornament in narration; and a ſuperfluity of unneceſſary words, not leſs than of circumſtances, a great nuiſance. A judicious ſelection of the ſtriking circumſtances, cloathed in a nervous ſtyle, is delightful. In this ſtyle, Tacitus excels all writers, ancient and modern. Inſtances are numberleſs: take the following ſpecimen.

Crebra hinc prælia, et ſæpius in modum latrocinii: per ſaltus, per paludes; ut cuique fors aut virtus: temere, proviſo, ob iram, ob prædam, juſſu, et aliquando ignaris ducibus.

Annal. lib. 12. § 39.

If

If a conciſe or nervous ſtyle be a beauty, tautology muſt be a blemiſh. And yet writers, fettered by verſe, are not ſufficiently careful to avoid this ſlovenly practice: they may be pitied, but they cannot be juſtified. Take for a ſpecimen the following inſtances, from the beſt poet, for verſification at leaſt, that England has to boaſt of:

High on his helm celeſtial lightnings play,
His beamy ſhield emits a living ray,
Th' unweary'd blaze inceſſant ſtreams ſupplies,
Like the red ſtar that fires th' autumnal ſkies.
Iliad v. 5.

Strength and omnipotence inveſt thy throne.
Iliad viii. 576.

So ſilent fountains, from a rock's tall head,
In ſable ſtreams ſoft-trickling waters ſhed.
Iliad ix. 19.

His clanging armour rung. *Iliad* xii. 94.

Fear on their cheek, and horror in their eye.
Iliad xv. 4.

The

The blaze of armour flaſh'd againſt the day.
Iliad xvii. 736.

As when the piercing blaſts of Boreas blow.
Iliad xix. 380.

And like the moon, the broad refulgent ſhield
Blaz'd with long rays, and gleam'd athwart the field. *Iliad* xix. 402.

No — could our ſwiftneſs o'er the winds prevail,
Or beat the pinions of the weſtern gale,
All were in vain ——— *Iliad* xix. 460.

The humid ſweat from ev'ry pore deſcends.
Iliad xxiii. 829.

Redundant epithets, ſuch as *humid*, in the laſt citation, are by Quintilian diſallowed to orators, but indulged to poets*; becauſe his favourite poets, in a few inſtances, are reduced to ſuch epithets for the ſake of verſification. For inſtance, *Prata canis albicant pruinis*, of Horace, and *liquidos fontes*, of Virgil.

As an apology for ſuch careleſs expreſſions, it may well ſuffice, that Pope, in

* Lib. 8. cap. 6. § 2.

ſubmitting

ſubmitting to be a tranſlator, acts below his genius. In a tranſlation, it is hard to require the ſame ſpirit or accuracy, that is chearfully beſtowed on an original work. And to ſupport the reputation of this author, I ſhall give ſome inſtances from Virgil and Horace, more faulty by redundancy than any of thoſe above mentioned:

Sæpe etiam immenſum cœlo venit agmen aquarum,
Et fœdam glomerant tempeſtatem imbribus atris
Collectæ ex alto nubes: ruit arduus æther,
Et pluviâ ingenti ſata læta, boumque labores
Diluit. *Georg. lib.* i. 322.

Poſtquam altum tenuere rates, nec jam amplius ullæ
Apparent terræ; cœlum undique et undique pontus:
Tum mihi cœruleus ſupra caput aſtitit imber,
Noctem hyememque ferens: et inhorruit unda tenebris. *Æneid. lib.* iii. 191.

——————— Hinc tibi copia
Manabit ad plenum benigno
Ruris honorum opulenta cornu.
Horat. Carm. lib. i. *ode* 17.

Videre

Videre feſſos vomerem inverſum boves
Collo trahentes languido.
Horat. Epod. ii. 63.

Here I can luckily apply Horace's rule againſt himſelf:

Eſt brevitate opus, ut currat ſententia, neu ſe
Impediat verbis laſſas onerantibus aures.
Serm. lib. 1. *ſat.* x. 9.

I cloſe this chapter with a curious inquiry. An object, however ugly to the ſight, is far from being ſo when repreſented by colours or by words. What is the cauſe of this difference? The cauſe with reſpect to painting is obvious. A good picture, whatever the ſubject be, is agreeable, becauſe of the pleaſure we take in imitation: the agreeableneſs of imitation overbalances the diſagreeableneſs of the ſubject; and the picture upon the whole is agreeable. It requires a greater compaſs to explain the cauſe with reſpect to the deſcription of an ugly object. To connect individuals in the ſocial ſtate, no one particular contributes more than language, by the power it poſſeſſes

poſſeſſes of an expeditious communication of thought and a lively repreſentation of tranſactions. But nature hath not been ſatisfied to recommend language by its utility merely: it is made ſuſceptible of many beauties that have no relation to utility, which are directly felt without the intervention of any reflection *. And this unfolds the myſtery; for the pleaſure of language is ſo great, as in a lively deſcription to overbalance the diſagreeableneſs of the image raiſed by it †. This however is no encouragement to deal in diſagreeable ſubjects; for the pleaſure is out of ſight greater where the ſubject and the deſcription are both of them agreeable.

The following deſcription is upon the whole agreeable, though the ſubject deſcribed is in itſelf diſmal.

Nine times the ſpace that meaſures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquiſh'd, rowling in the fiery gulf
Confounded though immortal: but his doom

* See chap. 18.
† See chap. 2. part 4.

Reſerv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of loſt happineſs and laſting pain
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes
That witneſs'd huge affliction and diſmay,
Mix'd with obdurate pride and ſtedfaſt hate:
At once as far as angels ken he views
The diſmal ſituation waſte and wild:
A dungeon horrible, on all ſides round
As one great furnace flam'd; yet from thoſe flames
No light, but rather darkneſs viſible
Serv'd only to diſcover ſights of wo,
Regions of ſorrow, doleful ſhades, where peace
And reſt can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning ſulphur unconſum'd:
Such place eternal juſtice had prepar'd
For thoſe rebellious.

Paradiſe Loſt, book 1. *l.* 50.

An unmanly depreſſion of ſpirits in time of danger is not an agreeable ſight; and yet a fine deſcription or repreſentation of it will be reliſhed:

K. Richard. What muſt the King do now? muſt he ſubmit?
The King ſhall do it: muſt he be depos'd?

The

The King ſhall be contented: muſt he loſe
The name of King? O' God's name, let it go:
I'll give my jewels for a ſet of beads;
My gorgeous palace, for a hermitage;
My gay apparel, for an almſman's gown;
My figur'd goblets, for a diſh of wood;
My ſceptre, for a palmer's walking ſtaff;
My ſubjects, for a pair of carved ſaints;
And my large kingdom, for a little grave;
A little, little grave;—— an obſcure grave.
Or I'll be bury'd in the King's highway;
Some way of common tread, where ſubjects feet
May hourly trample on their ſovereign's head:
For on my heart they tread now, whilſt I live;
And, bury'd once, why not upon my head?

Richard II. *act* 3. *ſc.* 6.

Objects that ſtrike terror in a ſpectator, have in poetry and painting a fine effect. The picture, by raiſing a ſlight emotion of terror, agitates the mind; and in that condition every beauty makes a deep impreſſion. May not contraſt heighten the pleaſure, by oppoſing our preſent ſecurity to the danger we would be in by encountering the object repreſented?

——————— The other ſhape,
If ſhape it might be call'd, that ſhape had none
Diſtinguiſhable in member, joint, or limb;
Or ſubſtance might be call'd that ſhadow ſeem'd,
For each ſeem'd either; black it ſtood as night,
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
And ſhook a dreadful dart.

Paradiſe Loſt, book 2. *l.* 666.

——————— Now ſtorming fury roſe,
And clamour ſuch as heard in heav'n till now
Was never, arms on armour claſhing bray'd
Horrible diſcord, and the madding wheels
Of brazen chariots rag'd; dire was the noiſe
Of conflict; over-head the diſmal hiſs,
Of fiery darts in flaming vollies flew,
And flying vaulted either hoſt with fire.
So under fiery cope together ruſh'd
Both battles main, with ruinous aſſault
And inextinguiſhable rage; all heav'n
Reſounded, and had earth been then, all earth
Had to her centre ſhook.

Paradiſe Loſt, book 6. *l.* 207.

Ghoſt. ——————— But that I am forbid
To tell the ſecrets of my priſon-houſe,
I could a tale unfold, whoſe lighteſt word
Would harrow up thy ſoul, freeze thy young blood,
Make

Make thy two eyes, like ſtars, ſtart from their
ſpheres,
Thy knotty and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to ſtand on end
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine:
But this eternal blazon muſt not be
To ears of fleſh and blood.

Hamlet, act 1. *ſc.* 8.

Gratiano. Poor Deſdemona! I'm glad thy fa-
ther's dead:
Thy match was mortal to him; and pure grief
Shore his old thread in twain. Did he live now,
This ſight would make him do a deſp'rate turn:
Yea, curſe his better angel from his ſide,
And fall to reprobation.

Othello, act 5. *ſc.* 8.

Objects of horror muſt be excepted from the foregoing theory; for no deſcription, however maſterly, is ſufficient to overbalance the diſguſt raiſed even by the idea of ſuch an object. Every thing horrible ought therefore to be avoided in a deſcription. Nor is this a ſevere law: the poet will avoid ſuch ſcenes for his own ſake, as well as for that of his reader; and to vary his deſcriptions, nature affords plenty of objects that diſguſt

us

us in ſome degree without raiſing horror. I am obliged therefore to condemn the picture of ſin in the ſecond book of *Paradiſe Loſt*, though drawn with a maſterly hand. The original would be a horrible ſpectacle; and the horror is not much ſoftened in the copy.

——————— Penſive here I ſat
Alone, but long I ſat not, till my womb
Pregnant by thee, and now exceſſive grown
Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes.
At laſt this odious offſpring whom thou ſeeſt,
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,
Tore through my intrails, that with fear and pain
Diſtorted, all my nether ſhape thus grew
Transform'd; but he my inbred enemy
Forth iſſu'd, brandiſhing his fatal dart,
Made to deſtroy: I fled, and cry'd out Death;
Hell trembl'd at the hideous name, and ſigh'd
From all her caves, and back reſounded Death.
I fled, but he purſu'd, (though more, it ſeems,
Inflam'd with luſt than rage), and ſwifter far,
Me overtook, his mother all diſmay'd,
And in embraces forcible and foul
Ingendring with me, of that rape begot
Theſe yelling monſters that with ceaſeleſs cry
Surround me, as thou ſaw'ſt, hourly conceiv'd

And

And hourly born, with ſorrow infinite
To me; for when they liſt, into the womb
That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw
My bowels, their repaſt; then burſting forth
A freſh with conſcious terrors vex me round,
That reſt or intermiſſion none I find.
Before mine eyes in oppoſition ſits
Grim Death, my ſon and foe, who ſets them on,
And me his parent would full ſoon devour
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involv'd; and knows that I
Should prove a bitter morſel, and his bane,
Whenever that ſhall be. *Book* 2. *l.* 777.

Iago's character in the tragedy of *Othello*, is ſo monſtrous and ſatanical, as not to be ſufferable in a repreſentation: not even Shakeſpear's maſterly hand can make the picture agreeable.

Though the objects introduced in the following ſcenes, are not altogether ſo horrible as Sin is in Milton's picture; yet with every perſon of taſte, diſguſt will be the prevailing emotion.

—— Strophades Graio ſtant nomine dictæ
Inſulæ Ionio in magno: quas dira Celæno,
Harpyiæque

Harpyiæque colunt aliæ : Phineia poſtquam
Clauſa domus, menſaſque metu liquere priores.
Triſtius haud illis monſtrum, nec ſævior ulla
Peſtis et ira Deûm Stygiis ſeſe extulit undis.
Virginei volucrum vultus, fœdiſſima ventris
Proluvies, uncæque manus, et pallida ſemper.
Ora fame.
Huc ubi delati portus intravimus : ecce
Læta boum paſſim campis armenta videmus,
Caprigenumque pecus, nullo cuſtode, per herbas.
Irruimus ferro, et Divos ipſumque vocamus
In prædam partemque Jovem : tunc littore curvo
Extruimuſque toros, dapibuſque epulamur opimis.
At ſubitæ horrifico lapſu de montibus adſunt
Harpyiæ : et magnis quatiunt clangoribus alas:
Diripiuntque dapes, contactuque omnia fœdant
Immundo : tum vox tetrum dira inter odorem.

Æneid. lib. iii. 210.

Sum patria ex Ithaca, comes infelicis Ulyſſei,
Nomen Achemenides : Trojam, genitore Adamaſto
Paupere (manſiſſetque utinam fortuna!) profectus.
Hic me, dum trepidi crudelia limina linquunt,
Immemores ſocii vaſto Cyclopis in antro
Deſerucre. Domus ſanie dapibuſque cruentis,
Intus opaca, ingens : ipſe arduus, altaque pulſat
Sidera : (Dii, talem terris avertite peſtem)
Nec viſu facilis, nec dictu affabilis ulli.
Viſceribus miſerorum, et ſanguine veſcitur atro.

Vidi

Vidi egomet, duo de numero cum corpora noſtro,
Prenſa manu magna, medio reſupinus in antro,
Frangeret ad ſaxum, ſanieque aſperſa natarent
Limina: vidi, atro cum membra fluentia tabo
Manderet, et tepidi tremerent ſub dentibus artus.
Haud impune quidem: nec talia paſſus Ulyſſes,
Oblituſve ſui eſt Ithacus diſcrimine tanto.
Nam ſimul expletus dapibus, vinoque ſepultus
Cervicem inflexam poſuit, jacuitque per antrum
Immenſus, ſaniem eructans, ac fruſta cruento
Per ſomnum commixta mero; nos, magna precati
Numina, ſortitique vices, unà undique circum
Fundimur, et telo lumen terebramus acuto
Ingens, quod torva ſolum ſub fronte latebat.

Æneid. lib. iii. 613.

CHAP. XXII.

Epic and Dramatic Compoſitions.

TRAGEDY differs from the epic more in form than in ſubſtance. The ends propoſed by each are inſtruction and amuſement; and each of them copy human actions as means to bring about theſe ends. They differ in the manner only of copying. Epic poetry deals in narration: Tragedy repreſents its facts as tranſacted in our ſight. In the former, the poet introduces himſelf as an hiſtorian: in the latter he preſents his actors and never himſelf *.

This

* The dialogue in a dramatic compoſition ſeparates it ſo clearly from other compoſitions, that no writer has thought it neceſſary to ſearch for any other diſtinguiſhing mark. But much uſeleſs labour has been beſtowed, to diſtinguiſh an epic poem by ſome ſuch mark. Boſſu defines this poem to be, "A "compoſition in verſe, intended to form the manners by in- "ſtructions

This difference, regarding form only, may be thought ſlight; but the effects it occaſions, are by no means ſo. What we ſee, makes a ſtronger impreſſion than what we learn from others. A narrative poem is a ſtory told by another: facts and incidents paſſing upon the ſtage, come under our own obſervation; and are beſide much enlivened by action and geſture, expreſſive of many ſentiments beyond the reach of language

"ſtructions diſguiſed under the allegories of an important action," which will exclude every epic poem founded upon real facts, and perhaps include ſeveral of Eſop's fables. Voltaire reckons verſe ſo eſſential, as for that ſingle reaſon to exclude the adventures of Telemachus. See his *Eſſay upon Epic Poetry*. Others, affected with ſubſtance more than with ornament, heſitate not to pronounce that poem to be epic. It is not a little diverting, to ſee ſo many ſhallow critics hunting for what is not to be found. They always take for granted, without the leaſt foundation, that there muſt be ſome preciſe criterion to diſtinguiſh epic poetry from every other ſpecies of writing. Literary compoſitions run into each other, preciſely like colours: in their ſtrong tints they are eaſily diſtinguiſhed; but are ſuſceptible of ſo much variety, and take on ſo many different forms, that we never can ſay where one ſpecies ends and another begins. As to the general taſte, there is little reaſon to doubt, that a work where heroic actions are related in an elevated ſtyle, will, without further requiſite, be deemed an epic poem.

A dramatic compoſition has another property, independent altogether of action. A dialogue makes a deeper impreſſion than a narration: becauſe in the former perſons expreſs their own ſentiments; whereas in the latter ſentiments are related at ſecond hand. For that reaſon, Ariſtotle, the father of critics, lays it down as a rule, That in an epic poem the author ought to take every opportunity to introduce his actors, and to confine the narrative part within the narroweſt bounds *. Homer underſtood perfectly the advantage of this method; and his poems are both of them in a great meaſure dramatic. Lucan runs to the oppoſite extreme; and is guilty of a ſtill greater fault: the *Pharſalia* is ſtuffed with cold and languid reflections; the merit of which the author aſſumes to himſelf, and deigns not to ſhare with his perſonages. Nothing can be more impertinent, than a chain of ſuch reflections, which ſuſpend the battle of Pharſalia after the leaders had made their ſpeech-

* Poet. ch. 25. ſect. 6.

es,

es, and the two armies are ready to engage *.

Ariſtotle, from the nature of the fable, divides tragedy into ſimple and complex. But it is of greater moment, with reſpect to dramatic as well as epic poetry, to found a diſtinction upon the different ends attained by ſuch compoſitions. A poem, whether dramatic or epic, that hath no tendency beyond moving the paſſions and exhibiting pictures of virtue and vice, may be diſtinguiſhed by the name of *pathetic*. But where a ſtory is purpoſely contrived to illuſtrate ſome important leſſon of morality, by ſhowing the natural connection betwixt diſorderly paſſions and external misfortunes, ſuch compoſition may be denominated *moral* †. It indeed conveys moral inſtruction

* Lib. 7. from line 385. to line 460.

† The ſame diſtinction is applicable to that ſort of fable which is ſaid to be the invention of Æſop. A moral, it is true, is by all critics conſidered as eſſential to ſuch a fable. But nothing is more common, than to be led blindly by authority. Of the numerous collections I have ſeen, the fables that clearly inculcate a moral, make a very ſmall part. In many fables, indeed, proper pictures of virtue and vice are exhibited: but the

tion with a perſpicuity that is not exceeded by the moſt accurate reaſoning; and makes a deeper impreſſion than any moral diſcourſe can do. To be ſatisfied of this, we need but reflect, that a man whoſe affections are juſtly balanced, hath a better chance to eſcape misfortunes, than one who is a ſlave to every paſſion. Indeed, nothing is more evident, than the natural connection that vice hath with miſery, and virtue with happineſs; and ſuch connection may be illuſtrated, by ſtating a fact as well as by urging an argument. Let us aſſume, for example, the following moral truths, That diſcord among the chiefs, renders ineffectual all common meaſures; and that the conſequences of a ſlightly-founded quarrel, foſtered by pride and arrogance, are not leſs fatal than thoſe of the groſſeſt injury. Theſe truths may be inculcated, by the quarrel betwixt Agamemnon and Achilles at the ſiege of Troy. In this view, it ought to be the poet's chief aim, to invent proper cir-

the bulk of theſe collections convey no inſtruction, nor afford any amuſement beyond what a child receives in reading an ordinary ſtory.

cumſtances,

cumſtances, preſenting to our view the natural conſequences of ſuch diſcord. Theſe circumſtances muſt ſeem to ariſe in the common courſe of human affairs: no accidental or unaccountable event ought to be indulged; for the neceſſary or probable connection betwixt vice and miſery, is learned from no events but what are governed by the characters and paſſions of the perſons repreſented. A real event of which we ſee no cauſe, may be a leſſon to us; becauſe what hath happened may again happen: but this cannot be inferred from a ſtory that is known to be fictitious.

Many are the good effects of ſuch compoſitions. A pathetic compoſition, whether epic or dramatic, tends to a habit of virtue, by exciting emotions that produce good actions, and avert us from thoſe that are vicious or irregular *. It likewiſe, by its frequent pictures of human woes, humanizes the mind, and fortifies us in bearing our own misfortunes. A moral compoſition muſt obviouſly produce the ſame good effects, becauſe by being moral it doth

* See chap. 2. part 1. ſect. 3.

not

not ceaſe to be pathetic. It enjoys beſide an excellence peculiar to itſelf: for it not only improves the heart, as above mentioned, but inſtructs the head by the moral it contains. For my part, I cannot imagine any entertainment more ſuited to a rational being, than a work thus happily illuſtrating ſome moral truth; where a number of perſons of different characters are engaged in an important action, ſome retarding, others promoting, the great cataſtrophe; and where there is dignity of ſtyle as well as of matter. A work of this kind, has our ſympathy at command, and can put in motion the whole train of the ſocial affections. We have at the ſame time great mental enjoyment, in perceiving every event and every ſubordinate incident connected with its proper cauſe. Our curioſity is by turns excited and gratified; and our delight is conſummated at the cloſe, upon finding, from the characters and ſituations exhibited at the commencement, that every circumſtance down to the final cataſtrophe is natural, and that the whole in conjunction make a regular chain of cauſes and effects.

Conſidering

Conſidering an epic and dramatic poem as the ſame in ſubſtance, and having the ſame aim or end, it might be thought that they are equally fitted for the ſame ſubjects. But conſidering their difference as to form, there will be found reaſon to correct that thought, at leaſt in ſome degree. Many ſubjects may indeed be treated with equal advantage in either form; but the ſubjects are ſtill more numerous for which one of the forms is better qualified than the other; and there are ſubjects proper for the one and not for the other. To give ſome ſlight notion of the difference, as there is no room here for enlarging upon every article, I obſerve, that dialogue is better qualified for expreſſing ſentiments, and narrative for diſplaying facts. Theſe peculiarities tend to confine each within certain limits. Heroiſm, magnanimity, undaunted courage, and the whole tribe of the elevated virtues, figure beſt in action: tender paſſions and the whole tribe of ſympathetic affections, figure beſt in ſentiment. What we feel is the moſt remarkable in the latter: what we perform is the moſt remarkable in the

former. It clearly follows, that tender paſſions are more peculiarly the province of tragedy, grand and heroic actions of epic poetry *.

I have no occaſion to ſay more upon the epic, conſidered as peculiarly adapted to certain ſubjects. But as dramatic ſubjects are more complex, I muſt take a narrower view of them; which I do the more willingly, in order to clear a point thrown into great obſcurity by critics.

In the chapter of emotions and paſſions †, it is occaſionally ſhown, that the ſubject beſt fitted for tragedy is the ſtory of a man who has himſelf been the cauſe of his misfortune. But this man muſt neither be deeply guilty nor altogether innocent. The misfortune muſt be occaſioned by a fault incident to human nature, and therefore venial. Misfortunes of this kind, call forth the whole force of the ſocial affections, and

* In Racine, tender ſentiments prevail; in Corneille, grand and heroic manners. Hence clearly the preference of the former before the latter, as dramatic poets. Corneille would figure better in an heroic poem.

† Part 4.

intereſt

intereſt the ſpectator in the warmeſt manner. An accidental misfortune, if not extremely ſingular, doth not greatly move our pity. The perſon who ſuffers, being innocent, is freed from the greateſt of all torments, *viz.* the anguiſh of mind occaſioned by remorſe:

Poco é funeſta
Laltrui fortuna,
Quando non reſta
Ragione alcuna
Ne di pentirſi, né darroſſir. *Metaſtaſio.*

A criminal, on the other hand, who brings misfortunes upon himſelf, excites little pity, for a different reaſon. His remorſe, it is true, aggravates his diſtreſs, and ſwells the firſt emotions of pity: but then our hatred to the criminal blending with pity, blunts its edge conſiderably. Misfortunes that are not innocent nor highly criminal, partake the advantages of each extreme: they are attended with remorſe to embitter the diſtreſs, which raiſes our pity to a great height; and the ſlight indignation we have at a venial fault, detracts not ſen-

ſibly from our pity. For this reaſon, the happieſt of all ſubjects for tragedy, if ſuch a one could be invented, would be where a man of integrity falls into a great misfortune by doing an innocent action, but which by ſome ſingular means he conceives to be criminal. His remorſe aggravates his diſtreſs; and our compaſſion, unreſtrained by indignation, riſes to its higheſt pitch. Pity comes thus to be the ruling paſſion of a pathetic tragedy; and by proper repreſentation, may be raiſed to a height ſcarce exceeded by any thing felt in real life. A moral tragedy takes in a larger field; for, beſide exerciſing our pity, it raiſes another paſſion, ſelfiſh indeed, but which deſerves to be cheriſhed equally with the ſocial affections. When a misfortune is the natural conſequence of ſome wrong bias in the temper, every ſpectator who is conſcious of ſome ſuch defect in himſelf, takes the alarm, and conſiders that he is liable to the ſame misfortune. This conſideration raiſes in him an emotion of fear or terror; and it is by this emotion, frequently reiterated in a variety of moral tragedies, that the ſpectators

ſpectators are put upon their guard againſt the diſorders of paſſion.

The commentators upon Ariſtotle and other critics, have been much graveled about the account given of tragedy by this author, " That by means of pity and terror " it refines in us all ſorts of paſſion." But no one who has a clear conception of the end and effects of a good tragedy, can have any difficulty about Ariſtotle's meaning. Our pity is engaged for the perſons repreſented, and our terror is upon our own account. Pity indeed is here made to ſtand for all the ſympathetic emotions, becauſe of theſe it is the capital. There can be no doubt, that our ſympathetic emotions are refined or improved by daily exerciſe; and in what manner our other paſſions are refined by terror I have juſt now ſaid. One thing is certain, that no other meaning can juſtly be given to the foregoing doctrine than that now mentioned; and that it was really Ariſtotle's meaning, appears from his 13th chapter, where he delivers ſeveral propoſitions agreeable to the doctrine as here explained. Theſe, at the ſame time, I the rather chuſe

to

to mention; becauſe, ſo far as authority can go, they confirm the foregoing reaſoning about the proper ſubjects for tragedy. His firſt propoſition is, That it being the province of tragedy to excite pity and terror, an innocent perſon falling into adverſity ought never to be the ſubject. This propoſition is a neceſſary conſequence of his doctrine as explained: a ſubject of this nature may indeed excite pity and terror; but the former in an inferior degree, and the latter in no degree for moral inſtruction. The ſecond propoſition is, That we muſt not repreſent a wicked perſon emerging from miſery to good fortune. This excites neither terror nor compaſſion, nor is agreeable in any reſpect. The third is, That the misfortunes of a wicked perſon ought not to be repreſented. Such repreſentation may be agreeable in ſome meaſure upon a principle of juſtice: but it will not move our pity; or any degree of terror, except in thoſe of the ſame vicious diſpoſition with the perſon repreſented. His laſt propoſition is, That the only character fit for repreſentation

repreſentation lies in the middle, neither eminently good nor eminently bad; where the misfortune is not the effect of deliberate vice, but of ſome involuntary fault, as our author expreſſes it *. The only objection I find to Ariſtotle's account of tragedy, is, that he confines it within too narrow bounds, by refuſing admittance to the pathetic kind. For if terror be eſſential to tragedy, no repreſentation deſerves that name, but where the misfortunes exhibited are cauſed by a wrong balance of mind, or ſome diſorder in the internal conſtitution. Such misfortunes always ſuggeſt moral inſtruction; and by ſuch misfortunes only can terror be excited for our improvement.

Thus Ariſtotle's four propoſitions above mentioned, relate ſolely to tragedies of the moral kind. Thoſe of the pathetic kind, are not confined within ſo narrow limits. Subjects fitted for the theatre, are not in ſuch plenty, as to make us reject innocent

* If one can be amuſed with a grave diſcourſe which promiſeth much and performs nothing, he may ſee this ſubject treated by Brumoy in his *Theatre Grec.* Preliminary diſcourſe on the origin of tragedy.

misfortunes

misfortunes which rouſe our ſympathy, though they inculcate no moral. With reſpect to ſubjects of this kind, it may indeed be a doubtful queſtion, whether the concluſion ought not always to be happy. Where a perſon of integrity is repreſented as ſuffering to the end under misfortunes purely accidental, we depart diſcontented, and with ſome obſcure ſenſe of injuſtice; for ſeldom is man ſo ſubmiſſive to the courſe of Providence, as not to revolt againſt the tyranny and vexations of blind chance: he will be inclined to ſay, This ought not to be. I give for an example the *Romeo and Juliet* of Shakeſpear, where the fatal cataſtrophe is occaſioned by Friar Laurence's coming to the monument a minute too late. Such a ſtory we think of with regret: we are vexed at the unlucky chance, and go away diſſatisfied. This is a temper of mind which ought not to be cheriſhed; and for that reaſon, I vote for excluding ſtories of this kind from the theatre. The misfortunes of a virtuous perſon ariſing from neceſſary cauſes, or from a chain of unavoidable circumſtances, will, I am apt to think,

be

be conſidered in a different light. Chance affords always a gloomy proſpect, and in every inſtance gives an impreſſion of anarchy and miſrule. A regular chain, on the other hand, of cauſes and effects, directed by the general laws of nature, never fails to ſuggeſt the hand of Providence; to which we ſubmit without reſentment, being conſcious that ſubmiſſion is our duty *. For that reaſon, we are not diſſatisfied with the diſtreſſes of Voltaire's *Mariamne*, though redoubled on her till the moment of her death, without the leaſt fault or failing on her part. Her misfortunes are owing to a cauſe extremely natural, and not unfrequent, the jealouſy of a barbarous huſband. The fate of Deſdemona in the *Moor of Venice*, affects us in the ſame manner. We are not ſo eaſily reconciled to the fate of Cordelia in *King Lear*: the cauſes of her misfortune, are by no means ſo evident, as to exclude the gloomy notion of chance. In ſhort, it appears, that a perfect character ſuffering under misfortunes is qualified

* See eſſays on the principles of morality, edit 2. p. 291.

for being the ſubject of a pathetic tragedy, provided chance be excluded. Nor is it altogether inconſiſtent with a moral tragedy: it may ſucceſsfully be introduced as an under-part, ſuppoſing the chief place to be filled with an imperfect character from which a moral can be drawn. This is the caſe of Deſdemona and Mariamne juſt now mentioned; and it is the caſe of Monimia and Belvidera, in Otway's two tragedies, *The Orphan*, and *Venice preſerv'd*.

I had an early opportunity to unfold a curious doctrine, That fable operates on our paſſions, by repreſenting its events as paſſing in our ſight, and by deluding us into a conviction of reality *. Hence, in epic and dramatic compoſitions, it is of importance to employ every means that may promote the deluſion, ſuch as the borrowing from hiſtory ſome noted event, with the addition of circumſtances that may anſwer the author's purpoſe. The principal facts are known to be true; and we are diſpoſed to extend our belief to every circumſtance,

* Chap. 2. part 1. ſect. 6.

But

But in chuſing a ſubject that makes a figure in hiſtory, greater precaution is neceſſary than where the whole is invented. In the firſt place, no circumſtances muſt be added, but ſuch as connect naturally with what are known to be true: hiſtory may be ſupplied, but it muſt not be contradicted. In the next place, a pure fable, entirely new with reſpect to the perſons as well as the incidents, may be ſuppoſed an ancient or a modern ſtory. But if the poet build upon truth, the ſubject he chuſes muſt be diſtant in time, or at leaſt in place; for he ought by all means to avoid the familiarity of perſons and events nearly connected with us. Familiarity ought more eſpecially to be avoided in an epic poem, the peculiar character of which is dignity and elevation. Modern manners make but a poor figure in ſuch a poem *.

After

* I would not from this obſervation be thought to undervalue modern manners. The roughneſs, plainneſs, and impetuoſity of ancient manners, may ſhow better in an epic poem, without being better fitted for ſociety. But without regard to this circumſtance, it is the familiarity of modern manners that

After Voltaire, no writer, it is probable, will think of erecting an epic poem upon a recent event in the hiſtory of his own country. But an event of this kind is perhaps not altogether unqualified for tragedy. It was admitted in Greece, and Shakeſpear has employ'd it ſucceſsfully in ſeveral of his pieces. One advantage it poſſeſſes above fiction, that of more readily engaging our belief, which tends above any other particular to raiſe our ſympathy. The ſcene of comedy is generally laid at home: familiarity is no objection; and we are peculiarly ſenſible of the ridicule of our own manners.

After a proper ſubject is choſen, there appears to me ſome delicacy in dividing it into parts. The concluſion of a book in an epic poem, or of an act in a play, cannot be altogether arbitrary; nor be intended for ſo ſlight a purpoſe as to make the parts of equal length. The ſuppoſed pauſe at the end of every book, and the real pauſe at the end of every act, ought always to coincide with ſome pauſe in the action. In this re-

unqualifies them for a lofty ſubject. The dignity of our preſent manners, will be better underſtood in future ages when they have become ancient.

ſpect,

ſpect, a dramatic or epic poem, ought to reſemble a ſentence or period in language, divided into members that are diſtinguiſhed from each other by regular pauſes: or it ought to reſemble a piece of muſic, having a full cloſe at the end, preceded by imperfect cloſes that contribute to the melody. Every act therefore ought to cloſe with ſome incident that makes a pauſe in the action; for otherwiſe there can be no pretext for interrupting the repreſentation. It would be abſurd to break off in the very heat of action: againſt this every one would exclaim. The abſurdity ſtill remains, though the action relents, if it be not actually ſuſpended for ſome time. This rule is alſo applicable to an epic poem; though there a deviation from the rule is leſs remarkable, becauſe it is in the reader's power to hide the abſurdity, by proceeding inſtantly to another book. The firſt book of the *Paradiſe Loſt*, ends without any regular cloſe, perfect or imperfect: it breaks off abruptly, where Satan, ſeated on his throne, is prepared to make a ſpeech to the convocated hoſt of the fall'n angels; and the ſecond book begins

gins with the ſpeech. Milton ſeems to have copied the *Æneid*, of which the two firſt books are divided much in the ſame manner. Neither is there any proper pauſe at the end of the fifth book of the *Æneid*. There is no proper pauſe at end of the ſeventh book of *Paradiſe Loſt*, nor at the end of the eleventh.

Hitherto I have carried on together the epic and dramatic compoſitions. I proceed to handle them ſeparately, and to mention circumſtances peculiar to each, beginning with the epic kind. In a theatrical entertainment, which employs both the eye and the ear, it would be a monſtrous abſurdity to introduce upon the ſtage inviſible beings in a viſible ſhape. But it has been much diſputed, whether ſuch beings may not be properly introduced in an epic poem. If we reſt upon the authority of practice, we muſt declare for the affirmative; and Boileau *, among many other critics, is a ſtout champion for this ſort of machinery. But waving authority, which is apt to im-

* Third part of his art of poetry.

poſe

poſe upon the judgement, let us draw what light we can from reaſon. I begin with a preliminary remark, That this matter is but indiſtinctly handled by critics. It is laid down above, that ſeveral paſſions incite the mind to animate its objects *: the moral virtues become ſo many goddeſſes, and even darts and arrows are inſpired with life and action. But then it muſt not be overlooked, that ſuch perſonification, being the work of imagination, is deſcriptive only, and aſſumes not even an appearance of truth †. This is very different from what is termed *machinery*, where deities, angels, devils, or other ſupernatural powers, are introduced as real perſonages, mixing in the action, and contributing to the cataſtrophe; and yet theſe two things are conſtantly jumbled together in the reaſoning. The poetical privilege of animating inſenſible objects for the ſake of deſcription, cannot be controverted, becauſe it is founded on a natural principle. But has the privilege of machinery, if it be a privilege, the

* Chap. 20. ſect. 1. † Ibid.

ſame

ſame good foundation? Far from it: nothing can be more unnatural. Its effects, at the ſame time, are deplorable. Firſt, it gives an air of fiction to the whole; and prevents that impreſſion of reality which is requiſite to intereſt our affections, and to move our paſſions *. This of itſelf is ſufficient to explode machinery, whatever entertainment it may give to readers of a fantaſtic taſte or irregular imagination. And next, were it poſſible to diſguiſe the fiction, and to delude us into a notion of reality, which I think can hardly be, an inſuperable objection would ſtill remain, which is, that the aim or end of an epic poem can never be accompliſhed in any perfection where machinery is introduced. Virtuous emotions cannot be raiſed ſucceſsfully but by the actions of thoſe who are endued with paſſions and affections like our own, that is, by human actions. And as for moral inſtruction, it is evident, that we can draw none from beings who act not upon the ſame principles with us. A fable in Æſop's

* See chap. 2. part 1. ſect. 6.

manner

manner is no objection to this reaſoning. His lions, bulls, and goats, are truly men under diſguiſe: they act and feel in every reſpect as human beings; and the moral we draw is founded on that ſuppoſition. Homer, it is true, introduces the gods into his fable; and he was authoriſed to take that liberty by the religion of his country; it being an article in the Grecian creed, that the gods often interpoſe viſibly and bodily in human affairs. I muſt however obſerve, that Homer's deities do no honour to his poems. Fictions that tranſgreſs the bounds of nature, ſeldom have a good effect: they may inflame the imagination for a moment, but will not be reliſhed by any perſon of a correct taſte. Let me add, that of whatever uſe ſuch fictions may be to a mean genius, an able writer has much finer materials of Nature's production for elevating his ſubject, and making it intereſting.

Boileau, a ſtrenuous advocate for the Heathen deities, as obſerved, declares againſt angels and devils, though ſupported by the religious creed of his country. One would be apt to imagine, that a critic fa-

med for his good taſte, could have no other meaning than to juſtify the employing Heathen deities for enlivening or elevating the deſcription. But as the Heathen deities make not a better figure in poetical language than angels and devils, Boileau, in pleading for the former, certainly meant, if he had any diſtinct meaning, that theſe may be introduced as actors. And, in fact, he himſelf is guilty of this glaring abſurdity, where it is not ſo pardonable as in an epic poem. In his ode upon the taking of Namur, he demands with a moſt ſerious countenance, whether the walls were built by Apollo or Neptune; and in relating the paſſage of the Rhine, *anno* 1672, he deſcribes the god of that river as fighting with all his might to oppoſe the French monarch. This is confounding fiction with reality at a ſtrange rate. The French writers in general run into this error: wonderful! that they ſhould not be ſenſible how ridiculous it is.

That this is a capital error in the *Gieruſalleme liberata*, Taſſo's greateſt admirers muſt acknowledge. A ſituation can never be

be intricate, nor the reader ever in pain about the cataſtrophe, ſo long as there is an angel, devil, or magician, to lend a helping hand. Voltaire, in his eſſay upon epic poetry, talking of the *Pharſalia*, obſerves judiciouſly, "That the proximity of time, the "notoriety of events, the character of the "age, enlightened and political, joined "with the ſolidity of Lucan's ſubject, de-"prived him of all liberty of poetical fic-"tion." Is it not amazing, that a critic who reaſons ſo juſtly with reſpect to others, can be ſo blind with reſpect to himſelf? Voltaire, not ſatisfied to enrich his language with images drawn from inviſible and ſuperior beings, introduces them into the action. In the ſixth canto of the *Henriade*, St Louis appears in perſon, and terrifies the ſoldiers; in the ſeventh canto, St Louis ſends the god of Sleep to Henry; and, in the tenth, the demons of Diſcord, Fanaticiſm, War, *&c.* aſſiſt Aumale in a ſingle combat with Turenne, and are chaſed away by a good angel brandiſhing the ſword of God. To blend ſuch fictitious perſonages in the ſame action with mortals,

makes a bad figure at any rate; and is intolerable in a hiſtory ſo recent as that of Henry IV. This ſingly is ſufficient to make the *Henriade* a ſhort-liv'd poem, were it otherwiſe poſſeſſed of every beauty. I have tried ſerious reaſoning upon this ſubject; but ridicule, I ſuppoſe, will be found a more ſucceſsful weapon, which Addiſon has applied in an elegant manner: "Whereas "the time of a general peace is, in all ap- "pearance, drawing near; being informed "that there are ſeveral ingenious perſons "who intend to ſhew their talents on ſo "happy an occaſion, and being willing, as "much as in me lies, to prevent that effuſion "of nonſenſe which we have good cauſe "to apprehend; I do hereby ſtrictly re- "quire every perſon who ſhall write on "this ſubject, to remember that he is a "Chriſtian, and not to ſacrifice his cate- "chiſm to his poetry. In order to it, I "do expect of him in the firſt place, to "make his own poem, without depending "upon Phœbus for any part of it, or call- "ing out for aid upon any of the mu- "ſes by name. I do likewiſe poſitively "forbid

" forbid the ſending of Mercury with any
" particular meſſage or diſpatch relating to
" the peace; and ſhall by no means ſuffer
" Minerva to take upon her the ſhape of
" any plenipotentiary concerned in this
" great work. I do further declare, that
" I ſhall not allow the deſtinies to have
" had an hand in the deaths of the ſeveral
" thouſands who have been ſlain in the
" late war; being of opinion that all ſuch
" deaths may be very well accounted for
" by the Chriſtian ſyſtem of powder and
" ball. I do therefore ſtrictly forbid the
" fates to cut the thread of man's life upon
" any pretence whatſoever, unleſs it be for
" the ſake of the rhyme. And whereas I
" have good reaſon to fear, that Neptune
" will have a great deal of buſineſs on his
" hands in ſeveral poems which we may
" now ſuppoſe are upon the anvil, I do
" alſo prohibit his appearance, unleſs it be
" done in metaphor, ſimile, or any very
" ſhort alluſion; and that even here he be
" not permitted to enter, but with great
" caution and circumſpection. I deſire that
" the ſame rule may be extended to his

" whole

" whole fraternity of Heathen gods; it be-
" ing my design to condemn every poem
" to the flames in which Jupiter thunders,
" or exercises any other act of authority
" which does not belong to him. In short,
" I expect that no Pagan agent shall be in-
" troduced, or any fact related which a
" man cannot give credit to with a good
" conscience. Provided always, that no-
" thing herein contained shall extend, or
" be construed to extend, to several of the
" female poets in this nation, who shall
" still be left in full possession of their gods
" and goddesses, in the same manner as
" if this paper had never been written."
Spectator, N° 523.

The marvellous is indeed so much promoted by machinery, that it is not wonderful to find it embraced by the bulk of writers, and perhaps of readers. If indulged at all, it is generally indulged to excess. Homer introduces his deities with no greater ceremony than his mortals; and Virgil has still less moderation: an overwatched pilot cannot fall asleep and drop into the sea by natural means: the two lovers,

lovers, Æneas and Dido, cannot take the ſame bed, without the immediate interpoſition of ſuperior powers. The ridiculous in ſuch fictions, muſt appear even through the thickeſt vail of gravity and ſolemnity.

Angels and devils ſerve equally with the Heathen deities, as materials for figurative language, perhaps better among Chriſtians, becauſe we believe in them, and not in the Heathen deities. But every one is ſenſible, as well as Boileau, that the inviſible powers in our creed make a much worſe figure as actors in a modern poem, than the inviſible powers in the Heathen creed did in ancient poems. The reaſon I take to be what follows. The Heathen deities, in the opinion of their votaries, were beings elevated one ſtep only above mankind, actuated by the ſame paſſions, and directed by the ſame motives; therefore not altogether improper to mix with mankind in an important action. In our creed, ſuperior beings are placed at ſuch a mighty diſtance from us, and are of a nature ſo different, that with no propriety can they appear with us upon the ſame ſtage. Man is a creature ſo much inferior,

ferior, that he loſes all dignity when ſet in oppoſition.

There ſeems to be no doubt, that an hiſtorical poem admits the embelliſhment of allegory, as well as of metaphor, ſimile, or other figure. Moral truth, in particular, is finely illuſtrated in the allegorical manner. It amuſes the fancy to find abſtract terms, by a ſort of magic, converted into active beings; and it is delightful to trace a general propoſition in a pictured event. But allegorical beings ſhould be confined within their own ſphere; and never be admitted to mix in the principal action, nor to co-operate in retarding or advancing the cataſtrophe. This would have a ſtill worſe effect, than the introduction of inviſible powers; and I am ready to aſſign the reaſon. An hiſtorical fable affords entertainment chiefly by making us conceive its perſonages to be really exiſting and acting in our preſence: in an allegory, this agreeable deluſion is denied; for we muſt not imagine an allegorical perſonage to be a real being, but the figure only of ſome virtue or vice; otherwiſe the allegory is loſt. The impreſſion of

of real exiſtence, eſſential to an epic poem, is inconſiſtent with that figurative exiſtence which is eſſential to an allegory; and therefore no method can be more effectual to deſtroy the impreſſion of reality, than to introduce allegorical beings co-operating with thoſe whom we conceive to be really exiſting. The love-epiſode in the *Henriade* *, is inſufferable by the diſcordant mixture of allegory with real life. This epiſode is copied from that of Rinaldo and Armida in the *Gieruſalemme liberata*, which hath no merit to intitle it to be copied. An allegorical object, ſuch as fame in the *Æneid*, and the temple of love in the *Henriade*, may find place in a deſcription: but to introduce Diſcord as a real perſonage, imploring the aſſiſtance of Love as another real perſonage, to enervate the courage of the hero, is making theſe figurative beings act beyond their ſphere, and creating a ſtrange jumble of diſcordant materials, *viz.* truth and fiction. The allegory of Sin and Death in the *Paradiſe Loſt*, is, I pre-

* Canto 9.

ſume, not generally reliſhed, though it is not entirely of the ſame nature with what I have been condemning. The *Paradiſe Loſt* is not confined to the hiſtory of our firſt parents; and in a work comprehending the atchievements of ſuperior beings, there is more room for fancy than where it is confined to human actions.

What is the true notion of an epiſode? or how is it to be diſtinguiſhed from what is really a part of the principal action? Every incident that promotes or retards the cataſtrophe, muſt be a part of the principal action. This clears the nature of an epiſode; which may be defined, "An incident connected with the principal action, but "which contributes not either to advance or "retard it." The deſcent of Æneas into hell doth not advance or retard the cataſtrophe; and therefore is an epiſode. The ſtory of Niſus and Euryalus, producing an alteration in the affairs of the contending parties, is a part of the principal action. The family-ſcene in the ſixth book of the *Iliad* is of the ſame nature: by Hector's retiring from the field of battle to viſit his wife,

wife, the Grecians got liberty to breathe, and even to preſs upon the Trojans. It being thus the nature of an epiſode to break the unity of action, it ought never to be indulged unleſs to refreſh and unbend the mind after the fatigue of a long narration. This purpoſe of an epiſode demands the following properties. It ought to be well connected with the principal action: it ought to be ſhort: and it ought to be lively and intereſting.

Next, upon the peculiarities of a dramatic poem. And the firſt I ſhall mention is a double plot; being naturally led to it by what is ſaid immediately above. One of theſe double plots muſt be of the nature of an epiſode in an epic poem; for it would diſtract the ſpectator, inſtead of entertaining him, if he were forc'd to attend, at the ſame time, to two capital plots equally intereſting. An under-plot in a tragedy has ſeldom a good effect; becauſe a paſſionate piece cannot be too ſimple. The ſympathetic emotions once rouſed, cling to their objects, and cannot bear interruption:

when a ſubject fills the mind, it leaves no room for any ſeparate concern *. Variety is more tolerable in comedy, which pretends only to amuſe, without totally occupying

* Racine, in his preface to the tragedy of *Berenice*, is ſenſible, that ſimplicity is a great beauty in tragedy, but miſtakes the cauſe. "Nothing (ſays he) but veriſimilitude pleaſes in tragedy: but where is the veriſimilitude, that within the compaſs of a day, events ſhould be crowded which commonly are extended through months?" This is miſtaking the accuracy of imitation for the probability or improbability of future events. I explain myſelf. The veriſimilitude required in tragedy, is that the actions correſpond to the manners, and the manners to nature. When this reſemblance is preſerved, the imitation is juſt, becauſe it is a true copy of nature. But I deny that the veriſimilitude of future events, meaning the probability of future events, is any rule in tragedy. A number of extraordinary events, are, it is true, ſeldom crowded within the compaſs of a day: but what ſeldom happens may happen; and when ſuch events fall out, they appear not leſs natural than the moſt ordinary accidents. To make veriſimilitude in the ſenſe of probability a governing rule in tragedy, would annihilate this ſort of writing altogether; for it would exclude all extraordinary events, in which the life of tragedy conſiſts. It is very improbable or unlikely, pitching upon any man at random, that he will ſacrifice his life and fortune for his miſtreſs or for his country: yet when this event happens, ſuppoſing it agreeable to the character, we recognize the veriſimilitude as to nature, whatever want of veriſimilitude or of probability there was *a priori* that ſuch would be the event.

the

the mind. But even here, to make a double plot agreeable, a good deal of art is requiſite. The under-plot ought not to vary greatly in its tone from that which is principal: paſſions may be varied, but diſcordant paſſions are unpleaſant when jumbled together. This is a ſolid objection to tragi-comedy. For this reaſon, I blame the *Provok'd Huſband:* all the ſcenes that bring the family of the Wrongheads into action, being ludicrous and farcical, agree very ill with the ſharpneſs and ſeverity of the principal ſubject, exhibiting the diſcord betwixt Lord Townly and his lady. The ſame objection touches not the double plot of the *Careleſs Huſband:* the different ſubjects are ſweetly connected; and have only ſo much variety as to reſemble ſhades of colours harmoniouſly mixed. But this is not all. The under plot ought to be connected with the principal action, ſo as to employ the ſame perſons: the intervals or pauſes of the principal action ought to be filled with the under-plot; and both ought to be concluded together. This is the caſe of the *Merry Wives of Windſor.*

Violent

Violent action ought to be excluded from the ſtage. While the dialogue runs on, a thouſand particulars concur to delude us into an impreſſion of reality; genuine ſentiments, paſſionate language, and perſuaſive geſture. The ſpectator once engaged, is willing to be deceived, loſes ſight of himſelf, and without ſcruple enjoys the ſpectacle as a reality. From this abſent ſtate, he is rouſed by violent action: he wakes as from a pleaſing dream, and gathering his ſenſes about him, finds all to be a fiction. Horace delivers the ſame rule; and founds it upon the reaſon given:

Ne pueros coram populo Medea trucidet;
Aut humana palam coquat exta nefarius Atreus;
Aut in avem Progne vertatur, Cadmus in anguem.
Quodcunque oſtendis mihi ſic, incredulus odi.

The French critics, as it appears to me, miſapprehend the reaſon of this rule. Shedding blood upon the ſtage, ſay they, is barbarous and ſhocking to a polite audience. This no doubt is an additional reaſon for excluding bloodſhed from the French

French ſtage, ſuppoſing the French to be in reality ſo delicate. But this evidently is not the reaſon that weighed with the Greeks: that polite people had no notion of ſuch delicacy; witneſs the murder of Clytemneſtra by her ſon Oreſtes, paſſing behind the ſcene, as repreſented by Sophocles. Her voice is heard calling out for mercy, bitter expoſtulations on his part, loud ſhrieks upon her being ſtabb'd, and then a deep ſilence. I appeal to every perſon of feeling, whether this ſcene be not more horrible, than if the deed had been committed in ſight of the ſpectators upon a ſudden guſt of paſſion. According to the foregoing reaſoning of the French critics, there is nothing to exclude from the ſtage a duel occaſioned by an affair of honour, becauſe in it there is nothing barbarous or ſhocking to a polite audience: yet a ſcene of this nature is excluded from the French ſtage; which ſhows, without more argument, that theſe critics have miſapprehended the rule laid down by Horace. If Corneille, in repreſenting the affair betwixt Horatius and his ſiſter, upon which murder

enſues

enſues behind the ſcene, had no other view than to remove from the ſpectators a ſcene of horror, he certainly was in a capital miſtake: for murder in cold blood, which in ſome meaſure was the caſe as repreſented, is more horrible even where the concluſive ſtab is not ſeen, than the ſame act performed on the ſtage by violent and unpremeditated paſſion, as ſuddenly repented of as committed. I heartily agree with Addiſon *, that no part of this incident ought to have been repreſented, but reſerved for a narrative, with all the alleviating circumſtances poſſible in favour of the hero. This is the only method to avoid the difficulties that unqualify this incident for repreſentation, a deliberate murder on the one hand, and on the other a violent action performed on the ſtage, which muſt rouſe the ſpectator from his dream of reality.

I ſhall finiſh with a few words upon the dialogue; which ought to be ſo conducted as to be a true repreſentation of nature. I

* Spectator, No. 44.

talk

talk not here of the ſentiments, nor of the language; for theſe come under different heads. I talk of what properly belongs to dialogue-writing; where every ſingle ſpeech, ſhort or long, ought to ariſe from what is ſaid by the former ſpeaker, and furniſh matter for what comes after, till the end of the ſcene. In this view, the whole ſpeeches, from firſt to laſt, repreſent ſo many links, all connected together in one regular chain. No author, ancient or modern, poſſeſſes the art of dialogue equal to Shakeſpear. Dryden, in this particular, may juſtly be placed as his oppoſite. He frequently introduces three or four perſons ſpeaking upon the ſame ſubject, each throwing out his own ſentiments ſeparately, without regarding what is ſaid by the reſt. I give for an example the firſt ſcene of *Aurenzebe*. Sometimes he makes a number club in relating an event, not to a ſtranger, ſuppoſed ignorant of it, but to one another, for the ſake merely of ſpeaking. Of this notable ſort of dialogue, we have a ſpecimen in the firſt ſcene of the firſt part of the *Conqueſt of Granada*. In the ſecond part of the ſame tragedy,

ſcene ſecond, the King, Abenamar, and Zulema, make their ſeparate obſervations, like ſo many ſoliloquies, upon the fluctuating temper of the mob. It puts one in mind of a paſtoral, where two ſhepherds are introduced reciting couplets alternately, each in praiſe of his own miſtreſs, as if they were contending for a prize.

The bandying ſentiments in this manner, beſide an unnatural air, has another bad effect. It ſtays the courſe of the action, becauſe it is not productive of any conſequence. In Congreve's comedies, the action is often ſuſpended to make way for a play of wit. But of this more particularly in the chapter immediately following.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

The three Unities.

THE firſt chapter unfolds the pleaſure we have in a chain of connected facts. In hiſtories of the world, of a country, of a people, this pleaſure is but faint; becauſe the connections are ſlight or obſcure. We find more entertainment in biography, where the incidents are connected by their relation to one perſon, who makes a figure and commands our attention. But the greateſt entertainment of the kind, is afforded by the hiſtory of a ſingle event, ſuppoſing it to be intereſting. The hiſtory of one event produceth a more entire connection among the parts, than the hiſtory of one perſon. In the latter, the circumſtances are not otherwiſe connected than by their relation to that perſon: in the

former, the circumſtances are connected by the ſtrongeſt of all relations, that of cauſe and effect. Thus, the circumſtances of a ſingle event, having a mutual connection extremely intimate, form a delightful train: we ſurvey with peculiar pleaſure a number of facts that give birth to each other; and we paſs with eaſe and ſatisfaction from the firſt to the laſt.

But this ſubject merits a more particular diſcuſſion. When we conſider the chain of cauſes and effects in the material world, independent of purpoſe, deſign, or thought, we find a train of incidents in ſucceſſion, without beginning, middle, or end. Every thing that happens is both a cauſe and an effect: it is the effect of ſomething that goes before, and the cauſe of one or many things that follow. One incident may affect us more, another leſs; but all of them, great and ſmall, are ſo many links in the univerſal chain. The mind, in viewing theſe incidents, cannot reſt or ſettle ultimately upon any one; but is carried along in the train without any cloſe.

But

But when the intellectual world is taken under view, in conjunction with the material, the ſcene is varied. Man acts with deliberation, will, and choice; he acts with a view to ſome end, glory, for example, or riches, or conqueſt, the procuring happineſs to individuals, or to his country in general; and he propoſes means and lays ſchemes to attain the end propoſed. Here is recogniſed a capital end or event, connected with ſubordinate events or incidents by the relation of cauſation. In running over a ſeries of ſubordinate events, we cannot reſt upon any one; becauſe they are preſented to us as means only, leading to ſome end. But we reſt with ſatisfaction upon the ultimate event; becauſe there, the purpoſe, the plan, the aim, of the chief perſon or perſons, is completed and brought to a final concluſion. This indicates a beginning, a middle, and an end, of what Ariſtotle calls *an entire action**. The ſtory naturally begins with deſcribing thoſe circumſtances which move the diſtinguiſhed perſon to form a plan, in

* Poet. cap 6. See alſo cap. 7.

order

order to compaſs ſome deſired event. The proſecution of that plan, and the obſtructions, carry the reader into the heat of action. The middle is properly where the action is the moſt involved; and the end is where the event is brought about, and the deſign accompliſhed.

A deſign or plan thus happily perfected, after many obſtructions, affords wonderful delight to the reader. And to produce this delight, a principle mentioned above * mainly contributes; a principle that diſpoſes the mind to complete every work commenced, and in general to carry every thing to its ultimate concluſion.

I have given the foregoing example of a plan laid down and completed, becauſe it affords the cleareſt conception of a beginning, a middle, and an end, in which conſiſts unity of action: and indeed ſtricter unity cannot be imagined than in this caſe. But an action may have unity, or a beginning, middle, and end, without ſo intimate a relation of parts. The cataſtrophe

* Chap. 8.

may

may be different from what is intended or deſired; which is frequently the caſe in our beſt tragedies. The *Æneid* is an inſtance of means employ'd to produce a certain event, and theſe means crowned with ſucceſs. The *Iliad* is formed upon a different model. It begins with the quarrel betwixt Achilles and Agamemnon: it goes on to deſcribe the ſeveral effects produced by that cauſe; and ends in a reconciliation. Here is unity of action, no doubt, a beginning, a middle, and an end: it muſt however be acknowledged, that the *Æneid* is more happy in point of connection. The mind hath a propenſity to go forward in the chain of hiſtory: it keeps always in view the expected event; and when the incidents or under-parts are connected together by their relation to the event, the mind runs ſweetly and eaſily along them. This pleaſure we have in the *Æneid*. But it is not altogether ſo pleaſant, as in the *Iliad*, to connect effects by their common cauſe; for ſuch connection forces the mind to a continual retroſpect: looking backward is like walking backward.

But

But Homer's plan is ſtill more imperfect, for another reaſon, That the events deſcribed are but imperfectly connected with the wrath of Achilles as their cauſe. His wrath did not exert itſelf in action; and the misfortunes of his countrymen were but negatively the effects of his wrath, by depriving them of his aſſiſtance.

If unity of action be a capital beauty in a fable imitative of human affairs, a double action muſt be a capital defect, by carrying on together two trains of unconnected objects. For the ſake of variety, we indulge an under-plot that contributes to the principal event. But two unconnected events are a great deformity; and it leſſens the deformity but a very little, to engage the ſame actors in both. Arioſto is quite licentious in this particular: he carries on at the ſame time a plurality of unconnected ſtories. His only excuſe is, that his plan is perfectly well adjuſted to his ſubject; for every thing in the *Orlando Furioſo* is wild and extravagant.

To ſtate facts according to the order of time, is the moſt natural and the moſt ſimple

ſimple method: a method however not ſo eſſential, in an hiſtorical fable eſpecially, as not to yield to ſome conſpicuous beauties *. If a noted ſtory, cold and ſimple in its firſt movements, be made the ſubject of an epic poem, the reader may be hurried into the heat of action, reſerving the preliminaries for a converſation-piece, if it ſhall be thought neceſſary. This method, at the ſame time, being dramatic, hath a peculiar beauty, which narration cannot reach †. Romance-writers, who give little attention to nature, deviate in this particular, among many, from a juſt ſtandard. They make no difficulty of preſenting to the reader, without the leaſt preparation, unknown perſons engaged in ſome adventure equally unknown. In *Caſſandra*, two perſonages, who afterward are diſcovered to be the heroes of the ſtory, ſtart up completely armed upon the banks of the Euphrates, and engage in a ſingle combat ‡.

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* See chap. 1. † See chap. 21.

‡ I am ſenſible that a commencement of this ſort is much reliſhed by certain readers diſpoſed to wonder. Their curio-

A play analyzed, is a chain of connected facts, of which each ſcene makes a link. Each ſcene, accordingly, ought to produce ſome incident relative to the cataſtrophe or ultimate event, by advancing or retarding it. If no incident be produced, ſuch a ſcene, which may be termed barren, ought not to be indulged, becauſe it breaks the unity of action. A barren ſcene can never be intitled to a place, becauſe the chain is complete without it. In the *Old Bachelor*, the 3d ſcene of act 2. and all that follow to the end of that act, are mere converſation-pieces, without any conſequence. The 10th and 11th ſcenes, act 3. *Double Dealer*, the 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th ſcenes, act 1. *Love for Love*, are of the ſame kind. Neither is *The Way of the World* entirely guiltleſs of ſuch ſcenes. It will be no juſtification, that they help to diſplay characters. It were better, like

ſity is raiſed, and they are much tickled in its gratification. But curioſity is at an end with the firſt reading, becauſe the perſonages are no longer unknown; and therefore at the ſecond reading a commencement ſo artificial, loſes all its power even over the vulgar. A writer of genius loves to deal in laſting beauties.

Dryden,

Dryden, in his *dramatis perſonæ*, to deſcribe characters beforehand, which would not interrupt the chain of action. But a writer of genius has no occaſion for ſuch artifice: he can diſplay the characters of his perſonages much more to the life in ſentiment and action. How ſucceſsfully is this done by Shakeſpear! in whoſe works there is not to be found a ſingle barren ſcene.

Upon the whole, it appears, that all the facts in an hiſtorical fable, ought to have a mutual connection by their common relation to the grand event or cataſtrophe. And this relation, in which the *unity* of action conſiſts, is equally eſſential to epic and dramatic compoſitions.

How far the unities of time and of place are eſſential, is a queſtion of greater intricacy. Theſe unities were ſtrictly obſerved in the Grecian and Roman theatres; and they are inculcated by the French and Engliſh critics as eſſential to every dramatic compoſition. In theory, theſe unities are alſo acknowledged by our beſt poets, though their practice is ſeldom correſpondent: they are often forc'd to take liberties, which they

pretend not to juſtify, againſt the practice of the Greeks and Romans, and againſt the ſolemn deciſion of their own countrymen. But in the courſe of this inquiry it will be made evident, that the example of the ancients ought, upon this point, to have no weight with us, and that our critics are guilty of a miſtake, in admitting no greater latitude of place and time than was admitted in Greece and Rome.

Suffer me only to premiſe, that the unities of place and time, are not, by the moſt rigid critics, required in a narrative poem. In ſuch a compoſition, if it pretend to copy nature, theſe unities would be abſurd; becauſe real events are ſeldom confined within narrow limits either of place or of time. And yet we can follow hiſtory, or an hiſtorical fable, through all its changes, with the greateſt facility. We never once think of meaſuring the real time by what is taken in reading; nor of forming any connection betwixt the place of action and that which we occupy.

I am ſenſible, that the drama differs ſo far from the epic, as to admit different rules. It

It will be obſerved, "That an hiſtorical "fable, which affords entertainment by "reading ſolely, is under no limitation of "time or of place, more than a genuine "hiſtory; but that a dramatic compoſi-"tion cannot be accurately repreſented, un-"leſs it be limited, as its repreſentation is, "to one place and to a few hours; and "therefore that no fable can be admitted "but what has theſe properties, becauſe it "would be abſurd to compoſe a piece for "repreſentation that cannot be juſtly re-"preſented." This argument, I acknowledge, has at leaſt a plauſible appearance; and yet one is apt to ſuſpect ſome fallacy, conſidering that no critic, however ſtrict, has ventured to confine the unities of place and of time within ſo narrow bounds *.

* Boſſu, after obſerving, with wonderful critical ſagacity, that winter is an improper ſeaſon for an epic poem, and night not leſs improper for tragedy; admits however, that an epic poem may be ſpread through the whole ſummer months, and a tragedy through the whole ſun-ſhine hours of the longeſt ſummer-day. *Du poeme epique, l.* 3. *chap.* 12. At this rate an Engliſh tragedy may be longer than a French tragedy; and in Nova Zembla the time of a tragedy and of an epic poem may be the ſame.

A view of the Grecian drama, and a compariſon betwixt it and our own, may perhaps help to relieve us from this dilemma. If they be differently conſtructed, as ſhall by and by be made evident, it is poſſible that the foregoing reaſoning may not be applicable with equal force to both. This is an article, that, with relation to the preſent ſubject, has not, ſo far as I know, been examined by any writer.

All authors agree, that the firſt notion of tragedy in Greece, was derived from the hymns in praiſe of Bacchus, which were ſung in parts by a chorus. Theſpis, to relieve the ſingers, and for the ſake of variety, introduced one actor; who gave a narrative of the ſubject, and ſometimes repreſented one or other perſonage. Eſchylus, introducing a ſecond actor, formed the dialogue; by which the performance became dramatic: and the actors were multiplied when the ſubject repreſented made it neceſſary. But ſtill, the chorus, which gave a beginning to tragedy, was conſidered as an eſſential part of its conſtitution. In the firſt ſcene, generally, are unfolded the preliminary

liminary circumſtances that lead to the grand event. This ſcene is by Ariſtotle termed the *prologue*. In the ſecond ſcene, where the action properly begins, the chorus is introduced, which, as originally, continues upon the ſtage during the whole performance. Sophocles adheres to this plan religiouſly. Euripides is not altogether ſo correct. In ſome of his pieces it becomes neceſſary to remove the chorus. But this is ſeldom done; and when done, matters are ſo ordered as that their abſence is but momentary. The chorus often mix in the dialogue; and when the dialogue happens to be ſuſpended, the chorus, during the interval, is employ'd in ſinging. Nor does the removal of the chorus, when that unuſual ſtep is riſked, interrupt the repreſentation. They never leave the ſtage of their own accord, but at the command of ſome principal perſonage who conſtantly waits their return.

Thus the Grecian drama is a continued repreſentation without any interruption; a circumſtance that merits attention. A continued repreſentation without a pauſe, affords

fords not opportunity to vary the place of action; and has withal a very ſhort duration. To a repreſentation ſo confined in place and time, the foregoing reaſoning is ſtrictly applicable. A real or feigned action that is brought to a concluſion after conſiderable intervals of time and frequent change of place, cannot accurately be copied in a repreſentation that admits of no latitude in either. Hence it is, that the unities of place and of time, were, or ought to have been, ſtrictly obſerved in the Grecian tragedies. This is made neceſſary by the very conſtitution of their drama; for it is abſurd to compoſe a tragedy that cannot be juſtly repreſented.

Modern critics, who for our drama pretend to eſtabliſh rules founded on the practice of the Greeks, are guilty of an egregious blunder. The unities of place and of time, ſo much vaunted, were in Greece, as we ſee, a matter of neceſſity, not of choice. I am now ready to ſhow, that if we ſubmit to theſe fetters, it muſt be from choice not neceſſity. This will be evident upon taking a view of the conſtruc-

tion

tion of our drama, which differs widely from that of Greece; whether more or leſs perfect, is a ſeparate queſtion, which ſhall be handled afterward. By dropping the chorus, an opportunity is afforded to ſplit our drama into parts or acts, which in the repreſentation are diſtinguiſhed by intervals of time; and during theſe intervals, the ſtage is totally evacuated and the ſpectacle ſuſpended. This conſtruction qualifies our drama for ſubjects ſpread through a wide ſpace both of time and of place. The time ſuppoſed to paſs during the ſuſpenſion of the repreſentation, is not meaſured by the time of the ſuſpenſion; nor is any connection formed, betwixt the box we ſit in and the place where things are ſuppoſed to be tranſacted in our abſence: and by that means, many ſubjects can be juſtly repreſented in our theatres, for which there was no place in thoſe of ancient Greece. This doctrine may be illuſtrated, by comparing a modern play to a ſet of hiſtorical pictures: let us ſuppoſe them five in number, and the reſemblance will be complete. Each of the pictures reſembles an act in one

of our plays. There muſt neceſſarily be the ſtricteſt unity of place and of time in each picture; and the ſame neceſſity requires theſe two unities during each act of a play, becauſe during an act there is no interruption in the ſpectacle. Now, when we view in ſucceſſion a number of ſuch hiſtorical pictures, let it be, for example, the hiſtory of Alexander by Le Brun, we have no difficulty to conceive, that months or years have paſſed betwixt the ſubjects exhibited in two different pictures, though the interruption is imperceptible in paſſing our eye from the one to the other. We have as little difficulty to conceive a change of place, however great. In this matter, there is truly no difference betwixt five acts of a modern play and five ſuch pictures. Where the repreſentation is ſuſpended, we can with the greateſt facility ſuppoſe any length of time or any change of place. The ſpectator, it is true, may be conſcious, that the real time and place are not the ſame with what are employ'd in the repreſentation, even including the intervals. But this is a work of reflection; and by the ſame reflection

tion he may alſo be conſcious, that Garrick is not King Lear, that the playhouſe is not Dover cliffs, nor the noiſe he hears thunder and lightning. In a word, during an interruption of the repreſentation, it is not more difficult for a ſpectator to imagine himſelf carried from place to place, and from one period of time to another, than at once, when the ſcene firſt opens, to be carried from London to Rome, or from the preſent time two thouſand years back. And indeed, it muſt appear ridiculous, that a critic, who makes no difficulty of ſuppoſing candle-light to be ſun-ſhine, and ſome painted canvaſſes a palace or a priſon, ſhould affect ſo much difficulty in imagining a latitude of place or of time in the ſtory, beyond what is neceſſary in the repreſentation.

There are, I acknowledge, ſome effects of great latitude in time that ought never to be indulged in a compoſition for the theatre. Nothing can be more abſurd, than at the cloſe to exhibit a full grown perſon who appears a child at the beginning. The mind rejects as contrary to all proba-

bility, ſuch latitude of time as is requiſite for a change ſo remarkable. The greateſt change from place to place hath not altogether the ſame bad effect. In the bulk of human affairs place is not material; and the mind, when occupied with an intereſting event, is little regardful of minute circumſtances. Theſe may be varied at will, becauſe they ſcarce make any impreſſion.

But though I have thus taken arms to reſcue modern poets from the ſlaviſh fetters of modern critics, I would not be underſtood to juſtify liberty without any reſerve. An unbounded licence with relation to place and time, is faulty for a reaſon that ſeems to have been overlooked: it never fails to break in upon the unity of action. In the ordinary courſe of human affairs, ſingle events, ſuch as are fit to be repreſented on the ſtage, are confined to a narrow ſpot, and generally employ no great extent of time. We accordingly ſeldom find ſtrict unity of action in a dramatic compoſition, where any remarkable latitude is indulged in theſe particulars. I muſt ſay farther, that a compoſition which employs but one place,

place, and requires not a greater length of time than is neceſſary for the repreſentation, is ſo far the more perfect: becauſe the confining an event within ſo narrow bounds, contributes to the unity of action; and alſo prevents that labour, however ſlight, which the mind muſt undergo in imagining frequent changes of place and many intervals of time. But ſtill I muſt inſiſt, that the limitation of place and time which was neceſſary in the Grecian drama, is no rule to us; and therefore that though ſuch limitation adds one beauty more to the compoſition, it is at beſt but a refinement, which may juſtly give place to a thouſand beauties more ſubſtantial. And I may add, that it is extremely difficult, I was about to ſay impracticable, to contract within the Grecian limits, any fable ſo fruitful of incidents in number and variety as to give full ſcope to the fluctuation of paſſion.

It may now appear, that critics who put the unities of place and of time upon the ſame footing with the unity of action, making them all equally eſſential, have not attended to the nature and conſtruction of the modern

modern drama. If they admit an interrupted repreſentation, with which no writer finds fault, it is plainly abſurd to condemn the greateſt advantage it procures us, that of repreſenting many intereſting ſubjects excluded from the Grecian ſtage. If there needs muſt be a reformation, why not reſtore the ancient chorus and the ancient continuity of action? There is certainly no medium: for to admit an interruption without relaxing from the ſtrict unities of place and of time, is in effect to load us with all the inconveniencies of the ancient drama, and at the ſame time to with-hold from us its advantages.

And therefore the only proper queſtion is, whether our model be or be not a real improvement. This indeed may juſtly be called in queſtion; and in order to a fair comparative trial, ſome particulars muſt be premiſed. When a play begins, we have no difficulty to enter into the ſcene of action, however diſtant it be in time or in place. We know that the play is a repreſentation only: and the imagination, with facility, accommodates itſelf to every circumſtance. Our ſituation is very different after

after we are engaged. It is the perfection of repreſentation to hide itſelf, to impoſe upon the ſpectator, and to produce in him an impreſſion of reality, as if he were ſpectator of a real event *. Any interruption annihilates this impreſſion: he is rouſed out of his waking dream, and unhappily reſtored to his ſenſes. So difficult it is to ſupport this impreſſion of reality, that much ſlighter interruptions than the interval betwixt two acts are ſufficient to diſſolve the charm. In the 5th act of the *Mourning Bride*, the three firſt ſcenes are in a room of ſtate; the fourth in a priſon. This change is operated by ſhifting the ſcene, which is done in a trice. But however quick the tranſition may be, it is impracticable to impoſe upon the ſpectators ſo far as to make them conceive that they are actually carried from the palace to the priſon. They immediately reflect, that the palace and priſon are imaginary, and that the whole is a fiction.

From theſe premiſſes one will be naturally led, at firſt view, to declare againſt

* Chap. 2. part 1. ſect. 6.

the

the frequent interruptions in the modern drama. It will occur, "That every interruption muſt have the effect to baniſh "the dream of reality, and with it to baniſh our concern, which cannot ſubſiſt "while we are conſcious that all is a fiction; and therefore that in the modern "drama ſufficient time is not afforded for "the fluctuation and ſwelling of paſſion, "like what is afforded in the Grecian drama, where there is no interruption." This reaſoning, it muſt be owned, has a ſpecious appearance: but we muſt not turn faint-hearted upon the firſt repulſe; let us rally our troops for a ſecond engagement.

Conſidering attentively the ancient drama, we find, that though the repreſentation is never interrupted, the principal action is ſuſpended not leſs frequently than in the modern drama. There are five acts in each; and the only difference is, that in the former, when the action is ſuſpended, as it is at the end of every act, opportunity is taken of the interval to employ the chorus in ſinging. Hence it appears, that the

the Grecian continuity of repreſentation cannot have the effect to prolong the impreſſion of reality. To baniſh this impreſſion, a ſuſpenſion of the action while the chorus is employ'd in ſinging, is not leſs operative than a total ſuſpenſion both of the repreſentation and action.

But to open a larger view, I am ready to ſhow, that a continued repreſentation, without a ſingle pauſe even in the principal action, ſo far from an advantage, would be really an imperfection; and that a repreſentation with proper pauſes, is better calculated for moving the audience, and making the ſtrongeſt impreſſions. Repreſentation cannot very long ſupport an impreſſion of reality: when the ſpirits are exhauſted by cloſe attention and by the agitation of paſſion, an uneaſineſs enſues, which never fails to baniſh the waking dream. Now ſuppoſing an act to employ as much time as can eaſily be given with ſtrict attention to any incident, a ſuppoſition that cannot be far from the truth; it follows, that the impreſſion of reality would not be prolonged beyond the ſpace of an act, even ſuppoſing

a continued repreſentation. Hence it appears, that a continued repreſentation without any pauſe, would be a bad contrivance: it would break the attention by overſtraining it, and produce a total abſence of mind. In this reſpect, the four pauſes have a fine effect. By affording to the audience a ſeaſonable reſpite when the impreſſion of reality is gone, and while nothing material is in agitation, they relieve the mind from its fatigue; and conſequently prevent a wandering of thought at the very time poſſibly of the moſt intereſting ſcenes.

In one article indeed, the Grecian model has greatly the advantage: its chorus, during an interval, not only preſerves alive the impreſſions made upon the audience, but alſo prepares their hearts finely for new impreſſions. In our theatres, on the contrary, the audience, at the end of every act, are in a manner ſolicited to withdraw their thoughts from what has been paſſing, and to trifle away the time the beſt way they can. Thus in the intervals betwixt the acts, every warm impreſſion is baniſhed; and the ſpectators begin the next act cool and indifferent,

different, as at the commencement of the play. Here is a groſs malady in our theatrical repreſentations; but a malady that luckily is not incurable. To revive the Grecian chorus, would be to revive the Grecian ſlavery of place and time. But I can figure a detached chorus coinciding with a pauſe in the repreſentation, as the ancient chorus did with a pauſe in the principal action. What objection, for example, can there lie againſt muſic betwixt the acts, vocal and inſtrumental, adapted to the ſubject? Such detached chorus, beſide admitting the ſame latitude that we enjoy at preſent as to time and place, would have more than one happy effect: it would recruit the ſpirits; and it would preſerve entire, the tone, if not the tide, of paſſion. The muſic that comes firſt, ought to accord with the tone of the preceding paſſion, and be gradually varied till it accord with the tone of the paſſion that is to ſucceed in the next act. The muſic and the repreſentation would both of them be gainers by their conjunction; which will thus appear. Muſic that accords with the preſent tone

of mind, is, upon that account, doubly agreeable; and accordingly, though muſic ſingly hath not power to raiſe any paſſion, it tends greatly to ſupport a paſſion already raiſed. Further, muſic, though it cannot of itſelf raiſe a paſſion, prepares us for the paſſion that follows: by making chearful, tender, melancholy, or animated impreſſions, muſic has power to diſpoſe the heart to various paſſions. Of this power, the firſt ſcene of the *Mourning Bride* is a ſhining inſtance: without the preparation of ſoft muſic in a melancholy ſtrain, it would be extremely difficult to enter all at once into Almeria's deep diſtreſs. In this manner, muſic and repreſentation ſupport each other delightfully: the impreſſion made upon the audience by the repreſentation, is a fine preparation for the muſic that ſucceeds; and the impreſſion made by the muſic, is a fine preparation for the repreſentation that ſucceeds. It appears to me clear, that, by ſome ſuch contrivance, the modern drama may be improved, ſo as to enjoy the advantage of the ancient chorus without its ſlaviſh limitation of place and time. And as to muſic

muſic in particular, I cannot figure any plan that would tend more to its improvement. Compoſers, thoſe for the ſtage at leaſt, would be reduced to the happy neceſſity of ſtudying and imitating nature; inſtead of indulging, according to the preſent faſhion, in wild, fantaſtic, and unnatural conceits. But we muſt return to our ſubject, and finiſh the compariſon betwixt the ancient and the modern drama.

The numberleſs improprieties forc'd upon the Grecian dramatic poets by the conſtitution of their drama, are, of themſelves one ſhould think, a ſufficient reaſon for preferring that of the moderns, even abſtracting from the improvement propoſed. To prepare the reader for this article, it muſt be premiſed, that as in the ancient drama the place of action never varies, a place neceſſarily muſt be choſen to which every perſon may have acceſs without any improbability. This confines the ſcene to ſome open place, generally the court or area before a palace; which excludes from the Grecian theatre tranſactions within doors, though theſe commonly are the moſt important.

important. Such cruel reſtraint is of itſelf ſufficient to cramp the moſt pregnant invention; and accordingly the Grecian writers, in order to preſerve unity of place, are reduced to woful improprieties. In the *Hippolytus* of Euripides *, Phedra, diſtreſſed in mind and body, is carried without any pretext from her palace to the place of action, is there laid upon a couch unable to ſupport herſelf upon her limbs, and made to utter many things improper to be heard by a number of women who form the chorus. What is ſtill worſe, her female attendant uſes the ſtrongeſt intreaties to make her reveal the ſecret cauſe of her anguiſh; which at laſt Phedra, contrary to decency and probability, is prevailed upon to do in preſence of this very chorus †. Alceſtes, in *Euripides*, at the point of death, is brought from the palace to the place of action, groaning and lamenting her untimely fate ‡. In the *Trachiniens* of Sophocles ||, a ſecret is imparted to Dejanira, the wife

* Act 1. ſc. 6.
† Act 2. ſc. 2.
‡ Act 2. ſc. 1.
|| Act 2.

of

of Hercules, in preſence of the chorus. In the tragedy of *Iphigenia*, the meſſenger employ'd to carry Clitemneſtra the news that Iphigenia was ſacrificed, ſtops ſhort at the place of action, and with a loud voice calls the Queen from her palace to hear the news. Again, in the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, the neceſſary preſence of the chorus forces Euripides into a groſs abſurdity, which is to form a ſecret plot in their hearing *; and to diſguiſe the abſurdity, much courtſhip is beſtowed on the chorus, not one woman but a number, to engage them to ſecrecy. In the *Medea* of Euripides, that princeſs makes no difficulty, in preſence of the chorus, to plot the death of her huſband, of his miſtreſs, and of her father the King of Corinth, all by poiſon. It was neceſſary to bring Medea upon the ſtage, and there is but one place of action, which is always occupied by the chorus. This ſcene cloſes the ſecond act; and in the end of the third, ſhe frankly makes the chorus her confidents in ploting the murder of her own

* Act 4. at the cloſe.

children.

children. Terence, by identity of place, is often forc'd to make a converſation within doors be heard on the open ſtreet: the cries of a woman in labour are there heard diſtinctly.

The Grecian poets are not more happy with reſpect to time than with reſpect to place. In the *Hippolytus* of Euripides, that prince is baniſhed at the end of the fourth act. In the firſt ſcene of the following act, a meſſenger relates to Theſeus the whole particulars of the death of Hippolytus by the ſea-monſter. This remarkable event muſt have employ'd many hours; and yet in the repreſentation it is confined to the time employ'd by the chorus upon the ſong at the end of the 4th act. The inconſiſtency is ſtill greater in the *Iphigenia in Tauris**. The ſong could not exhauſt half an hour; and yet the incidents ſuppoſed to have happened in that time, could not naturally be tranſacted in leſs than half a day.

The Grecian artiſts are not leſs frequently obliged to tranſgreſs another rule, derived

* Act 5. ſc. 4.

alſo

alſo from a continued repreſentation, which is, that the place of action muſt conſtantly be occupied; for the very leaſt vacuity is an interruption of the repreſentation. Sophocles, with regard to this rule as well as others, is generally correct. But Euripides cannot bear ſuch reſtraint: he often evacuates the ſtage, and leaves it empty for others in ſucceſſion. *Iphigenia in Tauris*, after pronouncing a ſoliloquy in the firſt ſcene, leaves the place of action, and is ſucceeded by Oreſtes and Pylades. They, after ſome converſation, walk off; and Iphigenia re-enters, accompanied with the chorus. In the *Alceſtes*, which is of the ſame author, the place of action is void at the end of the third act. It is true, that to cover this irregularity, and to preſerve the repreſentation in motion, Euripides is extremely careful to fill the ſtage without loſs of time. But this is ſtill an interruption, and a link of the chain broken: for during the change of the actors, there muſt always be a ſpace of time, when we cannot juſtly ſay, that the ſtage is occupied by either ſet. It makes indeed a more remarkable inter-

ruption, to change the place of action as well as the actors; but that was not practicable upon the Grecian ſtage.

It is hard to ſay upon what model Terence has formed his plays. Having no chorus, there is a ceſſation in the repreſentation at the end of every act. But advantage is not taken of this ceſſation, even to vary the place of action. The ſtreet is always choſen, where every thing paſſing may be ſeen by every perſon: and by this choice, the moſt ſprightly and intereſting parts of the action, which commonly paſs within doors, are excluded; witneſs the laſt act of the *Eunuch*. He hath ſubmitted to the ſame ſlavery with reſpect to time. In a word, a play with a regular chorus, is not more confined in place and time than his plays are. Thus a zealous ſectary follows implicitly ancient forms and ceremonies, without once conſidering whether their introductive cauſe be ſtill ſubſiſting. Plautus, of a bolder genius than Terence, makes good uſe of the liberty afforded by an interrupted repreſentation: he varies the place of action upon all occaſions, when the variation ſuits his purpoſe.

The

The intelligent reader will by this time underſtand, that I plead for no change of place in our plays but after an interval, nor for any latitude in point of time but what falls in with an interval. The unities of place and time ought to be ſtrictly obſerved during each act; for during the repreſentation, there is no opportunity for the ſmalleſt deviation from either. Hence it is an eſſential requiſite, that during an act the ſtage be always occupied; for even a momentary vacuity makes an interval. Another rule is not leſs eſſential: it would be a groſs breach of the unity of action, to exhibit upon the ſtage two ſeparate actions at the ſame time; and therefore to preſerve this unity, it is neceſſary that each perſonage introduced during an act, be linked to thoſe in poſſeſſion of the ſtage, ſo as to join all in one action. Theſe things follow from the very conception of an act, which admits not the ſlighteſt interruption. The moment the repreſentation is intermitted, there is an end of that act; and we have no other notion of a new act, but where after a pauſe or interval, the repreſentation

is again put in motion. French writers, generally ſpeaking, are extremely correct in this particular: the Engliſh, on the contrary, are ſo irregular as ſcarce to deſerve a criticiſm: actors not only ſucceed each other in the ſame place without connection; but, what is ſtill worſe, they frequently ſucceed each other in different places. This change of place in the ſame act, ought never to be indulged; for, beſide breaking the unity of the act, it has a diſagreeable effect. After an interval, the mind can readily accommodate itſelf to any place that is neceſſary, juſt as readily as at the commencement of the play; but during the repreſentation, the mind rejects change of place. From the foregoing cenſure muſt be excepted the *Mourning Bride* of Congreve, where regularity concurs with the beauty of ſentiment and of language, to make it one of the moſt complete pieces England has to boaſt of I muſt acknowledge, however, that in point of regularity, this elegant performance is not altogether unexceptionable. In the four firſt acts, the unities of place and time are ſtrictly obſerved: but

but in the laſt act, there is a capital error with reſpect to unity of place. In the three firſt ſcenes of that act, the place of action is a room of ſtate, which is changed to a priſon in the fourth ſcene: the chain of the actors withal is broken; for the perſons introduced in the priſon, are different from thoſe who made their appearance in the room of ſtate. This remarkable interruption of the repreſentation, makes in effect two acts inſtead of one: and therefore, if it be a rule, that a play ought not to conſiſt of more acts than five, this performance is ſo far defective in point of regularity. I may add, that even admitting ſix acts, the irregularity would not be altogether removed, without a longer pauſe in the repreſentation than is allowed in the acting; for it requires more than a momentary interruption, to enable the imagination readily to accommodate itſelf to a new place, or to prorogation of time. In *The Way of the World*, of the ſame author, unity of place is preſerved during every act, and a ſtricter unity of time during the whole play than is neceſſary.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

Gardening and Architecture.

THE books that have been compoſed upon architecture and upon embelliſhing ground, abound in practical inſtruction neceſſary for a mechanic: but in vain would we rummage them for rational principles to improve our taſte. In a general ſyſtem, it might be thought ſufficient to have unfolded the principles that govern theſe and other fine arts, leaving the application to the reader: but as I would neglect no opportunity of illuſtrating theſe principles, I propoſe to give a ſpecimen of their application to gardening and architecture, being favourite arts, though I profeſs no peculiar ſkill in either

Gardening was at firſt an uſeful art: in the garden of Alcinoous, deſcribed by Homer, we find nothing done for pleaſure merely.

merely. But gardening is now improved into a fine art; and when we talk of a garden without any epithet, a pleaſure-garden, by way of eminence, is underſtood. The garden of Alcinoous, in modern language, was but a kitchen-garden. Architecture has run the ſame courſe. It continued many ages an uſeful art merely, before it aſpired to be claſſed with the fine arts. Architecture therefore and gardening muſt be handled in a twofold view, as being uſeful arts as well as fine arts. The reader however will not here expect rules for improving any work of art in point of utility. It is no part of my plan to treat of any uſeful art as ſuch. But there is a beauty in utility; and in diſcourſing of beauty, that of utility ought not to be neglected. This leads us to conſider gardens and buildings in different views: they may be deſtined for uſe ſolely, for beauty ſolely, or for both. Such variety in the deſtination, beſtows upon gardening and architecture a great command of beauties complex not leſs than various, which makes it difficult to form an accurate taſte in theſe arts. And hence

that

that difference and wavering of taſte which is more remarkable here than in any art that has but a ſingle deſtination.

Architecture and gardening cannot otherwiſe entertain the mind, than by raiſing certain agreeable emotions or feelings; and before we deſcend to particulars, theſe arts ſhall be preſented in a general view, by ſhowing what are the emotions or feelings that can be raiſed by them. Poetry, as to its power of raiſing emotions, poſſeſſes juſtly the firſt place among the fine arts; for ſcarce one emotion of human nature is beyond its reach. Painting and ſculpture are more circumſcribed, having the command of no emotions but what are produced by ſight. They are peculiarly ſucceſsful in expreſſing painful paſſions, which are diſplay'd by external ſigns extremely legible *. Gardening, beſide the emotions of beauty by means of regularity, order, proportion, colour, and utility, can raiſe emotions of grandeur, of ſweetneſs, of gaiety, melancholy, wildneſs, and even of ſurpriſe or

* See chap. 15.

wonder.

wonder. In architecture, regularity, order, and proportion, and the beauties that reſult from them, are ſtill more conſpicuous than in gardening. But with reſpect to the beauty of colour, architecture is far inferior. Grandeur can be expreſſed in a building, perhaps more ſucceſsfully than in a garden; but as to the other emotions above mentioned, architecture hitherto has not been brought to the perfection of expreſſing them diſtinctly. To balance this defect, architecture can diſplay the beauty of utility in the higheſt perfection.

But gardening poſſeſſes one advantage, which never can be equalled in the other art. A garden may be ſo contrived, as in various ſcenes to raiſe ſucceſſively all its different emotions. But to operate this delicious effect, the garden muſt be extenſive, ſo as to admit a ſlow ſucceſſion: for a ſmall garden, comprehended at one view, ought to be confined to one expreſſion *: it may be gay, it may be ſweet, it may be gloomy; but an attempt to mix theſe, would create

* See chap. 8.

a jumble of emotions not a little unpleaſant. For the ſame reaſon, a building, even the moſt magnificent, is neceſſarily confined to one expreſſion.

Architecture, conſidered as a fine art, inſtead of rivaling gardening in its progreſs toward perfection, ſeems not far advanced beyond its infant-ſtate. To bring it to maturity, two things mainly are wanted. Firſt, A greater variety of parts and ornaments than it ſeems provided with. Gardening here has greatly the advantage: it is provided with ſuch plenty and ſuch variety of materials, that it muſt be the fault of the artiſts, if the ſpectator be not entertained with different ſcenes, and affected with various emotions. But materials in architecture are ſo ſcanty, that artiſts hitherto have not been ſucceſsful in raiſing emotions, other than thoſe of beauty and grandeur. With reſpect to the former, there are indeed plenty of means, regularity, order, ſymmetry, ſimplicity; and with reſpect to the latter, the addition of ſize is ſufficient. But though it be evident, that every building ought to have a certain character or expreſ-

ſion ſuitable to its deſtination; yet this is a refinement which artiſts have ſcarce ventured upon. A death's head and bones employ'd in monumental buildings, will indeed produce an emotion of gloom and melancholy: but every ornament of this kind, if theſe can be termed ſo, ought to be rejected, becauſe they are in themſelves diſagreeable. The other thing wanted to bring the art to perfection, is, to aſcertain the preciſe impreſſion made by every ſingle part and ornament, cupolas, ſpires, columns, carvings, ſtatues, vaſes, &c. For in vain will an artiſt attempt rules for employing theſe, either ſingly or in combination, until the different emotions or feelings they produce be diſtinctly explained. Gardening in this particular hath alſo the advantage. The ſeveral emotions raiſed by trees, rivers, caſcades, plains, eminences, and other materials it employs, are underſtood; and the nature of each can be deſcribed with ſome degree of preciſion, which is done occaſionally in the foregoing parts of this work.

In gardening as well as in architecture, ſimplicity ought to be the governing taſte. Profuſe ornament hath no better effect than to confound the eye, and to prevent the object from making an impreſſion as one entire whole. An artiſt deſtitute of genius for capital beauties, is naturally prompted to ſupply the defect by crowding his plan with ſlight embelliſhments. Hence in gardens, triumphal arches, Chineſe houſes, temples, obeliſks, caſcades, fountains, without end; and hence in buildings, pillars, vaſes, ſtatues, and a profuſion of carved work. Thus a woman who has no juſt taſte, is apt to overcharge every part of her dreſs with ornament. Superfluity of decoration hath another bad effect: it gives the object a diminutive look. An iſland in a wide extended lake, makes it appear larger; but an artificial lake, which muſt always be little, appears ſtill leſs by making an iſland in it *.

In forming plans for embelliſhing a field, an artiſt void of taſte deals in ſtraight lines,

* See appendix to part 5. chap. 2.

circles,

circles, ſquares; becauſe theſe ſhow beſt upon paper. He perceives not, that to humour and adorn nature is the perfection of his art; and that nature, neglecting regularity, reacheth ſuperior beauties by diſtributing her objects in great variety with a bold hand. A large field laid out with ſtrict regularity, is ſtiff and artificial. Nature indeed, in organized bodies comprehended under one view, ſtudies regularity; which, for the ſame reaſon, ought to be ſtudied in architecture: but in large objects, which cannot otherwiſe be ſurveyed than in parts and by ſucceſſion, regularity and uniformity would be uſeleſs properties, becauſe they cannot be diſcovered by the eye *. Nature therefore, in her large works, neglects theſe properties; and in copying nature the artiſt ought to neglect them.

Having thus far carried on a compariſon betwixt gardening and architecture, I proceed to rules peculiar to each; and I begin

* A ſquare field appears not ſuch to the eye when viewed from any part of it; and the centre is the only place where a circular field preſerves in appearance its real figure.

with

with gardening. The ſimpleſt idea of a garden, is that of a ſpot embelliſhed with a number of natural objects, trees, walks, poliſh'd parterres, flowers, ſtreams, &c. One more complex comprehends ſtatues and buildings, that nature and art may be mutually ornamental. A third approaching nearer perfection, is of objects aſſembled together, in order to produce, not only an emotion of beauty, eſſential to gardens of every kind, but alſo ſome other particular emotion, grandeur, for example, gaiety, or any other of thoſe above mentioned. The moſt perfect idea of a garden is an improvement upon the third, requiring the adjuſtment of the ſeveral parts, in ſuch a manner as to inſpire all the different emotions that can be raiſed by gardening. In this idea of a garden, the arrangement is an important circumſtance; for it has been ſhown, that ſome emotions figure beſt in conjunction, and that others ought always to appear in ſucceſſion and never in conjunction. I have had occaſion to obſerve above*, that when the moſt oppoſite emo-

* Chap. 8.

tions,

tions, ſuch as gloomineſs and gaiety, ſtillneſs and activity, follow each other in ſucceſſion, the pleaſure on the whole will be the greateſt; but that oppoſite or diſſimilar emotions ought not to be united, becauſe they produce an unpleaſant mixture *. For that reaſon, a ruin, affording a ſort of melancholy pleaſure, ought not to be ſeen from a flower-parterre, which is gay and chearful. But to paſs immediately from an exhilerating object to a ruin, has a glorious effect; for each of the emotions is the more ſenſibly felt by being contraſted with the other. Similar emotions, on the other hand, ſuch as gaiety and ſweetneſs, ſtillneſs and gloomineſs, motion and grandeur, ought to be raiſed together; for their effects upon the mind are greatly heightened by their conjunction †.

Kent's method of embelliſhing a field, is admirable. It is painting a field with beautiful objects, natural and artificial, diſpoſed like colours upon a canvas. It requires indeed more genius to paint in the

* Chap. 2. part 4.

† See the place immediately above cited.

gardening

gardening way. In forming a landſcape upon a canvas, no more is required but to adjuſt the figures to each other: an artiſt who lays out ground in Kent's manner, has an additional taſk, which is to adjuſt his figures to the ſeveral varieties of the field.

One garden muſt be diſtinguiſhed from a plurality; and yet it is not obvious wherein the unity of a garden conſiſts. A notion of unity is indeed ſuggeſted from viewing a garden ſurrounding a palace, with views from each window, and walks leading to every corner. But there may be a garden without a houſe. In this caſe, I muſt pronounce, that what makes it one garden, is the unity of deſign, every ſingle ſpot appearing part of a whole. The gardens of Verſailles, properly expreſſed in the plural number, being no fewer than ſixteen, are indeed all of them connected with the palace, but have ſcarce any mutual connection: they appear not like parts of one whole, but rather like ſmall gardens in contiguity. Were theſe gardens at ſome diſtance from each other, they would have a better effect. Their junction breeds confuſion

fuſion of ideas, and upon the whole gives leſs pleaſure than would be felt in a ſlower ſucceſſion.

Regularity is required in that part of a garden which joins the dwelling-houſe; for being conſidered as a more immediate acceſſory, it ought to partake the regularity of the principal object *. But in proportion to the diſtance from the houſe conſidered as

* The influence of this connection ſurpaſſing all bounds, is viſible in many gardens, left in their original form of horizontal plains forc'd with great labour and expence, perpendicular faces of earth ſupported with maſſy ſtone walls, terrace-walks in ſtages one above another, regular ponds and canals without the leaſt motion, and the whole ſurrounded, like a priſon, with high walls excluding every external object. At firſt view it may puzzle one to account for a taſte running croſs to nature in every particular. But nothing happens without a cauſe. Perfect regularity and uniformity are required in a houſe; and this idea is extended to its acceſſory the garden, eſpecially if it be a ſmall ſpot incapable of grandeur or much variety. The houſe is regular, ſo muſt the garden be: the floors of the houſe are horizontal, and the garden muſt have the ſame poſition: in the houſe we are protected from every intruding eye, ſo muſt we be in the garden. This, it muſt be confeſſed, is carrying the notion of reſemblance very far. But where reaſon and taſte are laid aſleep, nothing is more common than to carry reſemblance beyond proper bounds.

the centre, regularity ought leſs and leſs to be ſtudied. In an extenſive plan, it hath a fine effect to lead the mind inſenſibly from regularity to a bold variety giving an impreſſion of grandeur. And grandeur ought to be ſtudied as much as poſſible, even in a more confined plan, by avoiding a multiplicity of ſmall parts *. Nothing contributes more to grandeur, than a right diſpoſition of trees. Let them be ſcattered extremely thin near the dwelling-houſe, and thickened in proportion to their diſtance: diſtant eminences to be filled with trees, and laid open to view. A ſmall garden, on the other hand, which admits not grandeur, ought to be ſtrictly regular.

Milton, deſcribing the garden of Eden, prefers juſtly the grand taſte to that of regularity.

Flowers worthy of paradiſe, which not nice art
In beds and curious knots; but Nature boon
Pour'd forth profuſe on hill, and dale, and plain;
Both where the morning ſun firſt warmly ſmote

* See chap. 4.

The

The open field, and where the unpierc'd ſhade
Imbrown'd the noontide-bow'rs.

Paradiſe Loſt, *b.* 4.

In the manner of planting a wood or thicket, much art may be diſplay'd. A common centre of walks, termed *a ſtar*, from whence are ſeen a number of remarkable objects, appears too artificial to be agreeable. The crowding withal ſo many objects together, leſſens the pleaſure that would be felt in a flower ſucceſſion. Abandoning therefore the ſtar, being ſtiff and formal, let us try to ſubſtitute ſome form more natural, that will lay open all the remarkable objects in the neighbourhood. This may be done by openings in the wood at various diſtances, which, in walking, bring ſucceſſively under the eye every object as by accident. Some openings diſplay ſingle objects, ſome a plurality in a line, and ſome a rapid ſucceſſion of them. In this plan, the mind at intervals is rouſed and cheared by agreeable objects; and the ſcene is greatly heightened by the ſurpriſe it occaſions when we ſtumble,

as it were, upon objects of which we had no expectation.

As gardening is not an inventive art, but an imitation of nature, or rather nature itself ornamented; it follows neceſſarily, that every thing unnatural ought to be rejected with diſdain. Statues of wild beaſts vomiting water, a common ornament in gardens, prevails in thoſe of Verſailles. Is this ornament in a good taſte? A *jet d'eau*, being purely artificial, may, without diſguſt, be tortured into a thouſand ſhapes: but a repreſentation of what really exiſts in nature, admits not any unnatural circumſtance. Theſe ſtatues therefore in the gardens of Verſailles muſt be condemned: and yet ſo inſenſible has the artiſt been to juſt imitation, as to have diſplay'd his vicious taſte without the leaſt colour or diſguiſe. A lifeleſs ſtatue of an animal pouring out water, may be endured without much diſguſt. But here the lions and wolves are put in violent action: each has ſeized its prey, a deer or a lamb, in act to devour. And yet, inſtead of extended claws and open mouth, the whole, as by a hocus-pocus trick, is converted

verted into a different ſcene: the lion, forgetting his prey, pours out water plentifully; and the deer, forgetting its danger, performs the ſame operation; a repreſentation not leſs abſurd than that in the opera, where Alexander the Great, after mounting the wall of a town beſieged, turns about and entertains his army with a ſong.

In gardening, every lively exhibition of what is beautiful in nature has a fine effect: on the other hand, diſtant and faint imitations are diſpleaſing to every one of taſte. The cutting evergreens in the ſhape of animals, is a very ancient practice; as appears from the epiſtles of Pliny, who ſeems to be a great admirer of this puerile conceit. The propenſity to imitation gave birth to this practice; and has ſupported it wonderfully long, conſidering how faint and inſipid the imitation is. But the vulgar, great and ſmall, devoid of taſte, are entertained with the oddneſs and ſingularity of a reſemblance, however diſtant, betwixt a tree and an animal. An attempt, in the gardens of Verſailles, to imitate

tate a grove of trees by a group of *jets d'eau*, appears, for the ſame reaſon, not leſs ridiculous.

In laying out a garden, every thing trivial or whimſical ought to be avoided. Is a labyrinth then to be juſtified? It is a mere conceit, like that of compoſing verſes in the ſhape of an axe or an egg. The walks and hedges may be agreeable; but in the form of a labyrinth, they ſerve to no end but to puzzle. A riddle is a conceit not ſo mean; becauſe the ſolution is a proof of ſagacity, which affords no aid in tracing a labyrinth.

The gardens of Verſailles, executed with infinite expence by men at that time in high repute, are a laſting monument of a taſte the moſt vicious and depraved. The faults above mentioned, inſtead of being avoided, are choſen as beauties, and multiplied without end. Nature, it would ſeem, was deemed too vulgar to be imitated in the works of a magnificent monarch; and for that reaſon preference was given to things unnatural, which probably were miſtaken for ſupernatural. I have often amuſed

muſed myſelf with a fanciful reſemblance betwixt theſe gardens and the Arabian tales. Each of them is a performance intended for the amuſement of a great king: in the ſixteen gardens of Verſailles there is no unity of deſign, more than in the thouſand and one Arabian tales: and, laſtly, they are equally unnatural; groves of *jets d'eau*, ſtatues of animals converſing in the manner of Æſop, water iſſuing out of the mouths of wild beaſts, give an impreſſion of fairy-land and witchcraft, not leſs than diamond-palaces, inviſible rings, ſpells and incantations.

A ſtraight road is the moſt agreeable, becauſe it ſhortens the journey. But in an embelliſhed field, a ſtraight walk has an air of ſtiffneſs and confinement: and at any rate is leſs agreeable than a winding or waving walk; for in ſurveying the beauties of a fine field, we love to roam from place to place at freedom. Winding walks have another advantage: at every ſtep they open new views. In ſhort, the walks in a field intended for entertainment, ought not to have any appearance of a road. My intention

tion is not to make a journey, but to feaſt my eye with the beauties of art and nature. This rule excludes not long ſtraight openings terminating upon diſtant objects. Theſe, beſide variety, never fail to raiſe an emotion of grandeur, by extending in appearance the ſize of the field. An opening without a terminating object, ſoon cloſes upon the eye: but an object, at whatever diſtance, continues the opening; and deludes the ſpectator into a conviction, that the trees which confine the view are continued till they join the object. Straight walks alſo in receſſes do extremely well: they vary the ſcenery, and are favourable to meditation.

An avenue ought not to be directed in a ſtraight line upon a dwelling-houſe: better far an oblique approach in a waving line, with ſingle trees and other ſcattered objects interpoſed. In a direct approach, the firſt appearance continues the ſame to the end: we ſee a houſe at a diſtance, and we ſee it all along in the ſame ſpot without any variety. In an oblique approach, the intervening objects put the houſe ſeemingly in

in motion: it moves with the paſſenger, and appears to direct its courſe ſo as hoſpitably to intercept him. An oblique approach contributes alſo to variety: the houſe being ſeen ſucceſſively in different directions, takes on at every ſtep a new figure.

A garden on a flat ought to be highly and variouſly ornamented, in order to occupy the mind and prevent its regretting the inſipidity of an uniform plain. Artificial mounts in this view are common: but no perſon has thought of an artificial walk elevated high above the plain. Such a walk is airy, and tends to elevate the mind: it extends and varies the proſpect: and it makes the plain, ſeen from a height, appear more agreeable.

Whether ſhould a ruin be in the Gothic or Grecian form? In the former, I ſay; becauſe it exhibits the triumph of time over ſtrength, a melancholy but not unpleaſant thought. A Grecian ruin ſuggeſts rather the triumph of barbarity over taſte, a gloomy and diſcouraging thought.

Fountains are ſeldom in a good taſte. Statues of animals vomiting water, which

prevail every where, ſtand condemned. A ſtatue of a whale ſpouting water upward from its head, would in one ſenſe be natural, as whales of a certain ſpecies have that power. The deſign however would ſcarce be reliſhed, becauſe its ſingularity would give it the appearance of being unnatural. There is another reaſon againſt it, that the figure of a whale is in itſelf not agreeable. In the many fountains in and about Rome, ſtatues of fiſhes are frequently employ'd to ſupport a large baſin of water. This unnatural conceit cannot be otherwiſe explained, than by the connection betwixt water and the fiſh that ſwim in it; which by the way is a proof of the influence that even the ſlighter connections have on the mind. The only good deſign for a fountain I have met with, is what follows. In an artificial rock, rugged and abrupt, there is a cavity out of ſight at the top: the water, convey'd to it by a pipe, pours or trickles down the broken parts of the rock, and is collected into a baſin at the foot: it is ſo contrived, as to make the water fall in ſheets or in rills at pleaſure.

Hitherto

Hitherto a garden has been treated as a work intended ſolely for pleaſure, or, in other words, for giving impreſſions of intrinſic beauty. What comes next in order is the beauty of a garden deſtined for uſe, termed *relative beauty**; and this branch ſhall be diſpatched in a few words. In gardening, luckily, relative beauty need never ſtand in oppoſition to intrinſic beauty. All the ground that can be requiſite for uſe, makes but a ſmall proportion of an ornamented field; and may be put in any corner without obſtructing the diſpoſition of the capital parts. At the ſame time, a kitchen-garden or an orchard is ſuſceptible of intrinſic beauty; and may be ſo artfully diſpoſed among the other parts, as by variety and contraſt to contribute to the beauty of the whole. In this reſpect, architecture is far more intricate, as will be ſeen immediately: for there, it being often requiſite to blend intrinſic and relative beauty in the ſame building, it becomes a difficult taſk to attain both in any perfection.

* See theſe terms defined, chap. 3.

As gardening is brought to greater perfection in China than in any other known country, an account of the means practiſed by Chineſe artiſts to inſpire all the various emotions of gardening, will be a fine illuſtration of the foregoing doctrine. In general, it is an indiſpenſable law with them, never to deviate from nature: but in order to produce that degree of variety which is pleaſing, every method is uſed that is conſiſtent with nature. Nature is ſtrictly imitated in the banks of their artificial lakes and rivers; which ſometimes are bare and gravelly, ſometimes covered with wood quite to the brink of the water. To flat ſpots adorned with flowers and ſhrubs, are oppoſed others ſteep and rocky. We ſee meadows covered with cattle; rice-grounds that run into the lakes; groves into which enter navigable creeks and rivulets. Theſe generally conduct to ſome intereſting object, a magnificent building, terraces cut in a mountain, a caſcade, a grotto, an artificial rock, and other ſuch inventions. Their artificial rivers are generally ſerpentine; ſometimes narrow, noiſy, and rapid; ſometimes deep,

deep, broad, and ſlow: and to make the ſcene ſtill more active, mills and other moving machines are often erected. In the lakes are interſperſed iſlands; ſome barren, ſurrounded with rocks and ſhoals; others inriched with every thing that art and nature can furniſh. Even in their caſcades they avoid regularity, as forcing nature out of its courſe: the waters are ſeen burſting out from among the caverns and windings of the artificial rocks; here an impetuous cataract, there many leſſer falls: and in its paſſage, the water is often impeded by trees and heaps of ſtones, that ſeem brought down by the violence of the current. Straight lines, generally avoided, are ſometimes indulged, in order to take the advantage of any intereſting object at a diſtance, by directing openings upon it.

Senſible of the influence of contraſt, the Chineſe artiſts deal in ſudden tranſitions, and in oppoſing to each other, forms, colours, and ſhades. The eye is conducted, from limited to extenſive views, and from lakes and rivers to plains, hills, and woods: to dark and gloomy colours, are oppoſed the

the more brilliant: the different maſſes of light and ſhade are diſpoſed in ſuch a manner, as to render the compoſition diſtinct in its parts, and ſtriking on the whole. In plantations, the trees are artfully mixed according to their ſhape and colour; thoſe of ſpreading branches with the pyramidal, and the light with the deep green. They even introduce decay'd trees, ſome erect, and ſome half out of the ground *. In order to heighten contraſt, much bolder ſtrokes are riſked. They ſometimes introduce rough rocks, dark caverns, trees ill formed and ſeemingly rent by tempeſts, or blaſted by lightning, a building in ruins or half conſumed by fire. But to relieve the mind from the harſhneſs of ſuch objects, they are always ſucceeded by the ſweeteſt and moſt beautiful ſcenes.

The Chineſe ſtudy to give play to the imagination. They hide the termination of their lakes: the view of a caſcade is fre-

* Taſte has ſuggeſted to Kent the ſame artifice. The placing a decay'd tree properly, contributes to contraſt; and alſo produces a ſort of pity, grounded on an imaginary perſonification.

quently

quently interrupted by trees, through which are ſeen obſcurely the waters as they fall. The imagination once rouſed, is diſpoſed to magnify every object.

Nothing is more ſtudied in Chineſe gardens than to raiſe wonder or ſurpriſe. In ſcenes calculated for that end, every thing appears like fairy-land; a torrent, for example, convey'd under ground, producing an uncommon ſound that puzzles a ſtranger to gueſs what it may be; and, to increaſe our wonder by multiplying ſuch uncommon ſounds, the rocks and buildings are contrived with cavities and interſtices. Sometimes one is led inſenſibly into dark caverns, terminating unexpectedly in a landſcape inriched with all that nature affords the moſt delicious. At other times, beautiful walks inſenſibly conduct us to a rough uncultivated field, where buſhes briers and ſtones interrupt the paſſage: when we look about for an outlet, ſome rich proſpect unexpectedly opens to view. Another artifice is, to obſcure ſome capital part by trees or other interpoſed objects: our curioſity is raiſed to know what lies beyond; and after a few

ſteps,

ſteps, we are greatly ſurpriſed with ſome ſcene totally different from what was expected.

I cloſe theſe curſory obſervations upon gardening, with a remark that muſt touch every reader. Rough uncultivated ground, diſmal to the eye, inſpires peeviſhneſs and diſcontent. May not this be one cauſe of the harſh manners of ſavages? In a field richly ornamented, are collected beautiful objects of various kinds. Such a field diſplays in full luſtre, the goodneſs of the Deity and the ample proviſion he has made for our happineſs; which muſt fill every ſpectator, with gratitude to his Maker and with benevolence to his fellow-creatures. Other fine arts may be perverted to excite irregular, and even vicious, emotions: but gardening, which inſpires the pureſt and moſt refined pleaſures, cannot but promote every good affection. The gaiety and harmony of mind it produceth, muſt naturally incline the ſpectator to communicate his ſatisfaction to others by acts of humanity and kindneſs.

Having

Having finiſhed what occurred on gardening, I proceed to rules and obſervations that more peculiarly concern architecture. Architecture being an uſeful as well as a fine art, buildings and parts of buildings muſt be diſtinguiſhed into three kinds, *viz.* what are intended for utility ſolely, what for ornament ſolely, and what for both. A building intended for utility ſolely, ſuch as detached offices, ought in every part to correſpond preciſely to that intention. The leaſt deviation from uſe, though contributing to ornament, will be diſagreeable. For every work of uſe being conſidered as a means to an end, its perfection as a means is the capital circumſtance; and every other beauty, in oppoſition, is neglected as improper and impertinent. In things again intended for ornament, ſuch as pillars, obeliſks, triumphal arches, beauty ſolely ought to be regarded. A Heathen temple muſt be conſidered as merely ornamental; for being dedicated to ſome deity, and not intended for habitation, it is ſuſceptible of any figure and any embelliſhment that fancy can ſuggeſt and beauty require. The great diffi-

culty of contrivance, reſpects buildings that are intended for pleaſure as well as for uſe. Theſe ends, employing different and often oppoſite means, are with difficulty reconciled. In palaces, and other buildings ſufficiently extenſive to admit a variety of uſeful contrivance, regularity juſtly takes the lead. But in dwelling-houſes that are too ſmall for variety of contrivance, utility ought to prevail; neglecting regularity ſo far as it ſtands in oppoſition to convenience.

Intrinſic and relative beauty being founded on different principles, muſt be handled ſeparately; and I begin with relative beauty, as of the greater importance.

The proportions of a door, are determined by the uſe to which it is deſtined. The door of a dwelling-houſe, which ought to correſpond to the human ſize, is confined to ſeven or eight feet in height, and three or four in breadth. The proportions proper for the door of a barn or coach houſe, are widely different. Another conſideration enters. To ſtudy intrinſic beauty in a coach-houſe or barn, intended merely for uſe, is obviouſly improper. But a dwelling-

ing-houſe may admit ornaments; and the principal door of a palace demands all the grandeur that is conſiſtent with the foregoing proportions dictated by utility. It ought to be elevated and approached by ſteps; and it may be adorned with pillars ſupporting an architrave, or in any other beautiful manner. The door of a church ought to be wide, in order to afford an eaſy paſſage for a multitude. The wideneſs, at the ſame time, regulates the height, as will appear by and by. The ſize of windows ought to be proportioned to that of the room they ſerve with light; for if the apperture be not ſufficiently large to convey light to every corner, the room is dark and gloomy. Steps of ſtairs ought to be accommodated to the human figure, without regarding any other proportion: theſe ſteps accordingly are the ſame in large and in ſmall buildings, becauſe both are inhabited by men of the ſame ſize.

I proceed to conſider intrinſic beauty blended with that which is relative. A cube in itſelf is more agreeable than a parallelopipedon, which will conſtantly hold in ſmall

figures. But a large building in the form a cube, appears lumpiſh and heavy; while the other figure, ſet on its ſmaller baſe, is by its elevation more agreeable: and hence the beauty of a Gothic tower. But let us ſuppoſe this parallelopipedon deſtin'd for a dwelling-houſe, to make way for relative beauty. Here utility prevails over elevation; and a parallelopipedon, inconvenient by its height, is ſet upon its larger baſe. The loftineſs is gone; but that loſs is more than compenſated by additional convenience; and for that reaſon the form of a building ſpread more upon the ground than raiſed in height, is always preferred for a dwelling-houſe, without excepting even the moſt ſumptuous palace.

With reſpect to the diviſions within, utility requires that the rooms be rectangular; for otherwiſe void ſpaces will be left of no uſe. A hexagonal figure leaves no void ſpaces; but then it determines the rooms to be all of one ſize, which is extremely inconvenient. A cube will at firſt be pronounced the moſt agreeable figure; and this may hold in a room of a moderate ſize.

But

But in a very large room, utility requires a different figure. The chief convenience of a great room, is unconfined motion. This directs us to the greateſt length that can be obtained. But a ſquare room of a great ſize is inconvenient, by removing far from the hand, chairs and tables, which, when unemploy'd, muſt be ranged along the ſides of the room. Utility therefore requires a large room to be a parallelogram. This figure, at the ſame time, is the beſt calculated for receiving light; becauſe, to avoid croſs-light, all the windows ought to be in one wall; and if the oppoſite wall be at ſuch diſtance as not to be fully lighted, the room muſt be obſcure. The height of a room exceeding nine or ten feet, has little or no relation to utility; and therefore proportion is the only rule for determining the height when above that number of feet.

As all artiſts who deal in the beautiful are naturally prone to entertain the eye, they have great opportunity to exert their taſte upon palaces and ſumptuous buildings, where, as above obſerved, intrinſic beauty ought to have the aſcendant over that which

is

is relative. But ſuch propenſity is unhappy with reſpect to private dwelling-houſes; becauſe in theſe, relative beauty cannot be diſplay'd in any perfection, without abandoning intrinſic beauty. There is no opportunity for great variety of form in a ſmall houſe; and in an edifice of this kind, internal convenience has not hitherto been happily adjuſted to external regularity. I am apt to believe, that an accurate coincidence here, is beyond the reach of art. And yet architects always ſplit upon this rock; for they never will give over attempting to reconcile theſe two incompatibles. How elſe ſhould it be accounted for, that of the endleſs variety of private dwelling-houſes, there is not one to be found, that is generally agreed upon as a good pattern? The unwearied propenſity to make a houſe regular as well as convenient, forces the architect, in ſome articles, to ſacrifice convenience to regularity, and in others, regularity to convenience. By this means, the houſe, which turns out neither regular nor convenient, never fails to diſpleaſe. The faults are obvious,

vious, and the difficulty of doing better is known to the artiſt only *.

Nothing can be more evident, than that the form of a dwelling-houſe ought to be ſuited to the climate; and yet no error is more common, than to copy in Britain the form of Italian houſes; not forgetting even thoſe parts that are purpoſely contrived for air, and for excluding the ſun. I ſhall give one or two inſtances. A colonnade along the front of a building, hath a fine effect in Greece and Italy, by producing coolneſs and obſcurity, agreeable properties in warm and luminous climates. The cold climate of Britain is altogether averſe to this ornament. A colonnade therefore, can never be proper in this country, unleſs when employ'd to communicate with a detached building. Again, a logio opening the houſe to the north, contrived in Italy for gathering cool air, is, if poſſible, ſtill more improper for this climate. Scarce endurable in ſummer, it, in

* "Houſes are built to live in, and not to look on. Therefore let uſe be preferred before uniformity, except where both may be had."

Lo. Verulam, eſſay 45.

winter,

winter, expoſes the houſe to the bitter blaſts of the north, and to every ſhower of ſnow and rain.

Having diſcuſſed what appeared neceſſary to be ſaid upon relative beauty, ſingly conſidered, or in combination with intrinſic beauty, the next ſtep is, to view architecture as one of the fine arts, and to examine thoſe buildings and parts of buildings that are ſolely calculated to pleaſe the eye. In the works of nature, grand and magnificent, variety prevails. The timid hand of art, is guided by rule and compaſs. Hence it is, that in works which imitate nature, the great art is to hide every appearance of art; which is done by avoiding regularity and indulging variety. But in works of art that are original and not imitative, ſuch as architecture, ſtrict regularity and uniformity ought to be ſtudied ſo far as conſiſtent with utility.

In buildings intended to pleaſe the eye, proportion is not leſs eſſential than regularity and uniformity; for we are ſo framed by nature, as to be pleaſed equally with each of theſe. By many writers it is taken for granted, that in all the parts of a building there

there are certain ſtrict proportions which pleaſe the eye; preciſely as there are certain ſtrict proportions of ſound which pleaſe the ear; and that in both the ſlighteſt deviation is equally diſagreeable. Others again ſeem to reliſh more a compariſon betwixt proportion in numbers and proportion in quantity; and hold that the ſame proportions are agreeable in both. The proportions, for example, of the numbers 16, 24, and 36 are agreeable; and ſo, ſay they, are the proportions of a room, the height of which is 16 feet, the breadth 24, and the length 36. This point, with relation to the preſent ſubject, being of importance, the reader will examine it with attention and impartiality. To refute the notion of a reſemblance betwixt muſical proportions and thoſe of architecture, it might be ſufficient to obſerve in general, that the one is addreſſed to the ear, the other to the eye; and that objects of different ſenſes have no reſemblance, nor indeed any relation to each other. But more particularly, what pleaſes the ear in harmony, is not the proportion of the ſtrings of the inſtrument, but of the ſounds that

theſe ſtrings produce. In architecture, on the contrary, it is the proportion of different quantities that pleaſes the eye, without the leaſt relation to ſound. Beſide, were quantity here to be the ſole ground of compariſon, we have no reaſon to preſume, that there is any natural analogy betwixt the proportions that pleaſe in a building and the proportions of ſtrings that produce concordant ſounds. I inſtance in particular an octave, the moſt complete of all concords. An octave is produced by two ſtrings of the ſame tenſion and diameter, and as to length in the proportion of one to two. I do not know, that this proportion will be agreeable in any two parts of a building. I add, that concordant notes are produced by wind inſtruments, which, as to proportion, appear not to have even the ſlighteſt reſemblance to a building.

With reſpect to the other notion inſtituting a compariſon betwixt proportion in numbers and proportion in quantity, I urge, that number and quantity are ſo diſtinct from each other, as to afford no probability of any natural relation betwixt them. Quantity

tity is a real quality of every ſubſtance or body: number is not a real quality, but merely a conception that ariſes upon viewing a plurality of things in ſucceſſion. Becauſe an arithmetical proportion is agreeable in numbers, have we any reaſon to conclude that it muſt alſo be agreeable in quantity? At this rate, a geometrical proportion and many others, ought alſo to be agreeable in both. A certain proportion may coincide in both; and among an endleſs variety of proportions, it would be wonderful, if there never ſhould be a coincidence. One example is given of this coincidence, in the numbers 16, 24, and 36; but to be convinced that it is merely accidental, we need but reflect, that the ſame proportions are not applicable to the external figure of a houſe, and far leſs to a column.

That we are framed by nature to reliſh proportion as well as regularity, is indiſputable: but that agreeable proportion, like concord in ſounds, is confined to certain preciſe meaſures, is not warranted by experience: on the contrary, we learn from experience, that various proportions are e-

qually agreeable, that proportion is never tied down to preciſe meaſures but admits more and leſs, and that we are not ſenſible of diſproportion till the difference betwixt the quantities compared become the moſt ſtriking circumſtance. Columns evidently admit different proportions, equally agreeable. The caſe is the ſame in houſes, rooms, and other parts of a building. And this opens an intereſting reflection. The foregoing difference betwixt concord and proportion, is an additional inſtance of that admirable harmony which ſubſiſts among the ſeveral branches of the human frame. The ear is an accurate judge of ſounds and of their ſmalleſt differences; and that concord in ſounds ſhould be regulated by accurate meaſures, is perfectly well ſuited to this accuracy of perception. The eye is more uncertain about the ſize of a large object, than of one that is ſmall; and in different ſituations the ſame object appears of different ſizes. Delicacy of feeling therefore with reſpect to proportion in quantities, would be an uſeleſs quality. It is much better ordered, that there ſhould be ſuch a latitude with

reſpect

reſpect to agreeable proportions, as to correſpond to the uncertainty of the eye with reſpect to quantity.

But this ſcene is too intereſting to be paſſed over in a curſory view: all its beauties are not yet diſplay'd. I proceed to obſerve, that to make the eye as delicate with reſpect to proportion as the ear is with reſpect to concord, would not only be an uſeleſs quality, but be the ſource of continual pain and uneaſineſs. I need go no farther for a proof than the very room I poſſeſs at preſent: every ſtep I take, varies to me, in appearance, the proportion of the length and breadth. At that rate, I ſhould not be happy but in one preciſe ſpot, where the proportion appears agreeable. Let me further obſerve, that it would be ſingular indeed, to find in the nature of man, any two principles in perpetual oppoſition to each other. This would preciſely be the caſe, if proportion were circumſcribed like concord; for it would exclude all but one of thoſe proportions that utility requires in different buildings, and in different parts of the ſame building.

It is ludicrous to obſerve all writers acknowledging the neceſſity of accurate proportions, and yet differing widely about them. Laying aſide reaſoning and philoſophy, one fact univerſally agreed on ought to have undeceived them, that the ſame proportions which pleaſe in a model are not agreeable in a large building. A room 48 feet in length and 24 in breadth and height, is well proportioned; but a room 12 feet wide and high and 24 long, looks like a gallery.

Perrault, in his compariſon of the ancients and moderns *, is the only author who runs to the oppoſite extreme; maintaining, that the different proportions aſſigned to each order of columns are arbitrary, and that the beauty of theſe proportions is entirely the effect of cuſtom. This bewrays ignorance of human nature, which evidently delights in proportion, as well as in regularity, order, and propriety. But without any acquaintance with human nature, a ſingle reflection might have convinced him

* p. 94.

of

of his error; that if theſe proportions had not originally been agreeable, they could not have been eſtabliſhed by cuſtom. If a thing be univerſal, it muſt be natural.

To illuſtrate the preſent point, I ſhall add a few examples of the agreeableneſs of different proportions. In a ſumptuous edifice, the capital rooms ought to be large, for otherwiſe they will not be proportioned to the ſize of the building. On the other hand, a very large room in a ſmall houſe, is diſproportioned. But in things thus related, the mind requires not a preciſe or ſingle proportion, rejecting all others; on the contrary, many different proportions are made equally welcome. It is only when a proportion becomes looſe and diſtant, that the agreeableneſs abates, and at laſt vaniſheth. In all buildings accordingly, we find rooms of different proportions equally agreeable, even where the proportion is not influenced by utility. With reſpect to the height of a room, the proportion it ought to bear to the length and breadth, is extremely arbitrary; and it cannot be otherwiſe, conſidering the uncertainty of the eye as to the height of a room,

room, when it exceeds 17 or 18 feet. In columns again, even architects muſt confeſs, that the proportion of height and thickneſs varies betwixt 8 diameters and 10, and that every proportion betwixt theſe two extremes is agreeable. But this is not all. There muſt certainly be a further variation of proportion, depending on the ſize of the column. A row of columns 10 feet high, and a row twice that height, require different proportions. The intercolumniations muſt alſo differ in proportion according to the height of the row.

Proportion of parts is not only itſelf a beauty, but is inſeparably connected with a beauty of the firſt magnitude. Parts that in conjunction appear proportional, never fail ſeparately to produce ſimilar emotions; which exiſting together, are extremely pleaſant, as I have had occaſion to ſhow *. Thus a room of which the parts are all finely adjuſted to each other, ſtrikes us with the beauty of proportion. It produceth at the ſame time a pleaſure far ſuperior. The

* Chap. 2. part 4.

length,

length, the breadth, the height, the windows, raiſe each of them ſeparately an emotion. Theſe emotions are ſimilar; and though faint when felt ſeparately, they produce in conjunction the emotion of concord or harmony, which is extremely pleaſant. On the other hand, where the length of a room far exceeds the breadth, the mind comparing together parts ſo intimately connected, immediately perceives a diſagreement or diſproportion which diſguſts. But this is not all. Viewing them ſeparately, different emotions are produced, that of grandeur from the great length, and that of meanneſs or littleneſs from the ſmall breadth, which in union are diſagreeable by their diſcordance. Hence it is, that a long gallery, however convenient for exerciſe, is not an agreeable figure of a room. We conſider it, like a ſtable, as deſtined for uſe, and expect not that in any other reſpect it ſhould be agreeable.

Regularity and proportion are eſſential in buildings deſtined chiefly or ſolely to pleaſe the eye, becauſe they are the means to produce intrinſic beauty. But a ſkilful artiſt

will not confine his view to regularity and proportion. He will alſo ſtudy propriety, which is perceived when the form and ornaments of a ſtructure are ſuited to the purpoſe for which it is appointed. The ſenſe of propriety dictates the following rule, That every building ought to have an expreſſion correſponding to its deſtination. A palace ought to be ſumptuous and grand; a private dwelling, neat and modeſt; a playhouſe, gay and ſplendid; and a monument, gloomy and melancholy. A Heathen temple has a double deſtination: it is conſidered chiefly as a houſe dedicated to ſome divinity; and in that reſpect it ought to be grand, elevated, and magnificent: it is conſidered alſo as a place of worſhip; and in that reſpect it ought to be ſomewhat dark or gloomy; becauſe dimneſs produces that tone of mind which is ſuited to humility and devotion. A Chriſtian church is not conſidered as a houſe for the Deity, but merely a place of worſhip: it ought therefore to be decent and plain, without much ornament: a ſituation ought to be choſen, humble and retired; becauſe the congregation, during worſhip,

worſhip, ought to be humble and diſengaged from the world. Columns, beſide their chief deſtination of being ſupports, contribute to that peculiar expreſſion which the deſtination of a building requires: columns of different proportions, ſerve to expreſs loftineſs, lightneſs, *&c.* as well as ſtrength. Situation alſo may contribute to expreſſion: conveniency regulates the ſituation of a private dwelling houſe; but, as I have had occaſion to obſerve *, the ſituation of a palace ought to be lofty.

And this leads me to examine, whether the ſituation of a great houſe, where the artiſt is limited in his choice, ought in any meaſure to regulate its form. The connection betwixt a great houſe and the neighbouring grounds, though not extremely intimate, demands however ſome congruity. It would, for inſtance, diſpleaſe us to find an elegant building thrown away upon a wild uncultivated country: congruity requires a poliſhed field for ſuch a building; and beſide the pleaſure of congruity, the ſpectator

* Chap. 10.

is ſenſible of the pleaſure of concordance from the ſimilarity of the emotions produced by the two objects. The old Gothic form of building ſeems well ſuited to the rough uncultivated regions where it was invented. The only miſtake was, the tranſferring this form to the fine plains of France and Italy, better fitted for buildings in the Grecian taſte. But by refining upon the Gothic form, every thing in the power of invention has been done, to reconcile it to its new ſituation. The profuſe variety of wild and grand objects about Inverary, demanded a houſe in the Gothic form; and every one muſt approve the taſte of the proprietor, in adjuſting ſo finely, as he has done, the appearance of his houſe to that of the country where it is placed.

The external ſtructure of a great houſe, leads naturally to its internal ſtructure. A large and ſpacious room, receives us commonly upon our entrance. This ſeems to me a bad contrivance in ſeveral reſpects. In the firſt place, when immediately from the open air we ſtep into ſuch a room, its ſize in appearance is diminiſhed by contraſt: it looks

looks little compared with the great canopy the ſky. In the next place, when it recovers its grandeur, as it ſoon doth, it gives a diminutive appearance to the reſt of the houſe: paſſing from it, every apartment looks little. This room therefore may be aptly compared to the ſwoln commencement of an epic poem.

Bella per Emathios pluſquam civilia campos.

In the third place, by its ſituation it ſerves only for a waiting-room, and a paſſage to the principal apartments. And yet undoubtedly, the room of the greateſt ſize ought to be reſerved for company. A great room, which enlarges the mind and gives a certain elevation to the ſpirits, is deſtined by nature for converſation. Rejecting therefore this form, I take a hint from the climax in writing for another form that appears more ſuitable. My plan is, firſt a handſome portico, proportioned to the ſize and faſhion of the front: this portico leads into a waiting-room of a larger ſize; and this again to the great room,

room, all by a progreſſion from ſmall to great. If the houſe be very large, there may be ſpace for the following ſuit of rooms; firſt, a portico; ſecond, a paſſage within the houſe bounded by rows of columns on each ſide connected by arcades; third, an octagon room, or of any other figure, about the centre of the building; and, laſtly, the great room.

Of all the emotions that can be raiſed by architecture, grandeur is that which has the greateſt influence on the mind. It ought therefore to be the chief ſtudy of the artiſt, to raiſe this emotion in great buildings. But it ſeems unhappy for architecture, that it is neceſſarily governed by certain principles oppoſite to grandeur: the direct effect of regularity and proportion, is to make a building appear leſs than it is in reality. Any invention to reconcile theſe with grandeur, would be a capital improvement in architecture.

Next of ornaments, which contribute greatly to give buildings a peculiar expreſſion. It has been a doubt with me, whether a building can regularly admit any ornament

nament but what is uſeful, or at leaſt appears to be uſeful. But conſidering the double aim of architecture, a fine as well as an uſeful art, there is no good reaſon why ornaments may not be added to pleaſe the eye without any relation to uſe. This liberty is allowed in poetry, painting, and gardening, and why not in architecture conſidered as a fine art? A private dwelling-houſe, it is true, and other edifices where uſe is the chief aim, admit not regularly any ornament but what has the appearance, at leaſt, of uſe: but temples, triumphal arches, and other buildings intended chiefly or ſolely for ſhow, may be highly ornamented.

This ſuggeſts a diviſion of ornaments into three kinds, *viz.* ornaments that are beautiful without relation to uſe, ſuch as ſtatues in niches, vaſes, baſſo or alto relievo: next, things in themſelves not beautiful, but poſſeſſing the beauty of utility by impoſing on the ſpectator, and appearing to be of uſe, blind windows for example: the third kind is, where the thing is in itſelf beautiful, and alſo takes on the appearance of

of uſe; the caſe of a pilaſter. With reſpect to the ſecond, it is an egregious blunder, to contrive the ornament ſo as to make it appear uſeleſs. If a blind window therefore be neceſſary for regularity, it ought to be ſo diſguiſed, as not to be diſtinguiſhed from the real windows. If it appear to be a blind window, it is diſguſtful, as a vain attempt to ſupply the want of invention. It ſhows the irregularity in a ſtronger light; by ſignifying that a window ought to be there in point of regularity, but that the architect had not ſkill ſufficient to connect external regularity with internal convenience.

From ornaments in general, we deſcend to a pillar, the chief ornament in great buildings. The deſtination of a pillar is to ſupport, really or in appearance, another part termed *the architrave*. With reſpect to the form of this ornament, I obſerve, that a circle is a more agreeable figure than a ſquare, a globe than a cube, and a cylinder than a parallelopipedon. This laſt, in the language of architecture, is ſaying, that a column is a more agreeable figure than a pilaſter.

pilaſter. For that reaſon, it ought to be preferred, all other circumſtances being equal. Another reaſon concurs, that a column annexed to a wall, which is a plain ſurface, makes a greater variety than a pilaſter. There is an additional reaſon for rejecting pilaſters in the external front of a building, ariſing from a principle unfolded above *, *viz.* a remarkable tendency in the mind of man, to advance every thing to its perfection as well as to its final iſſue. If I ſee a thing obſcurely in a dim light, and by disjointed parts, my curioſity is rouſed, and prompts me, out of the disjointed parts to compoſe an entire whole. I ſuppoſe it to be, for example, a horſe. My eye-ſight being obedient to this conjecture, I immediately perceive a horſe, almoſt as diſtinctly as in day-light. This principle is applicable to the caſe in hand. The moſt ſuperb front, at a great diſtance, appears a plain ſurface: approaching gradually, we begin to perceive inequalities: theſe inequalities, advancing a few ſteps more, take

* Chap. 8.

on the appearance of pillars; but whether round or ſquare, we are uncertain: our curioſity anticipating our progreſs, cannot reſt in ſuſpenſe: we naturally ſuppoſe the moſt complete pillar, or that which is the moſt agreeable to the eye; and we immediately perceive, or ſeem to perceive, a number of columns: if upon a near approach we find pilaſters only, the diſappointment makes theſe pilaſters appear diſagreeable; when abſtracted from that circumſtance, they would only have appeared ſomewhat leſs agreeable. But as this deception cannot happen in the inner front incloſing a court, I ſee no reaſon for excluding pilaſters there, when there is any reaſon for preferring them before columns.

With reſpect now to the parts of a column, a bare uniform cylinder without baſe or capital, appears naked and ſcarce agreeable: it ought therefore to have ſome finiſhing at the top and at the bottom. Hence the three chief parts of a column, the ſhaft, the baſe, and the capital. Nature undoubtedly requires a certain proportion among theſe parts, but not limited within preciſe

preciſe bounds. I ſuſpect that the proportions in uſe have been influenced in ſome degree by the human figure; the capital being conceived as the head, the baſe as the feet. With reſpect to the baſe indeed, the principle of utility interpoſes to vary it from the human figure: the baſe muſt be ſo proportioned to the whole, as to give the column the appearance of ſtability.

In architecture as well as in gardening, contradictory expreſſions ought to be avoided. Firmneſs and ſolidity are the proper expreſſions of a pedeſtal: carved work, on the contrary, ought to be light and delicate. A pedeſtal therefore, whether of a column or of a ſtatue, ought to be ſparingly ornamented: the ancients never ventured any bolder ornament than the baſſo-relievo.

To ſucceed in allegorical or emblematic ornaments, is no ſlight effort of genius; for it is extremely difficult to diſpoſe them ſo in a building as to produce any good effect. The mixing them with realities, makes a miſerable jumble of truth and fiction *. In a

* See chap. 20. ſect. 5.

baſſo-relievo on Antonin's pillar, rain obtained by the prayers of a Chriſtian legion, is expreſſed by joining to the group of ſoldiers a rainy Jupiter, with water in abundance running from his head and beard. De Piles, fond of the conceit, carefully informs his reader, that he muſt not take this for a real Jupiter, but for a ſymbol which among the Pagans ſignified rain: an emblem ought not to make a part of the group repreſenting real objects or real events, but be detached from it, ſo as even at firſt view to appear an emblem. But this is not all, nor the chief point. Every emblem ought to be rejected that is not clearly expreſſive of its meaning: if it be in any degree obſcure, it never can be reliſhed. The temples of Ancient and Modern Virtue in the gardens of Stow, appear not at firſt view emblematical; and when we are informed that they are ſo, it is not eaſy to gather their meaning. The ſpectator ſees one temple in full repair, another in ruins: but without an explanatory inſcription, he may gueſs, but cannot be certain, that the former being dedicated to Ancient Virtue,

Virtue, the latter to Modern Virtue, are intended a ſatire upon the preſent times. On the other hand, a trite emblem, like a trite ſimile, is diſguſtful *. Nor ought an emblem more than a ſimile to be founded on low or familiar objects; for if the objects be not agreeable, as well as their meaning, the emblem upon the whole will not be reliſhed. A room in a dwelling-houſe containing a monument to a deceaſed friend, is dedicated to Melancholy. Its furniture is a clock that ſtrikes every minute to ſignify how ſwiftly time paſſes: upon the monument, weeping figures and other hackney'd ornaments commonly found upon tomb-ſtones, with a ſtuff'd raven in a corner: verſes on death, and other ſerious ſubjects, inſcribed all around. The objects are too familiar, and the artifice too apparent, to produce the intended effect.

The ſtatue of Moſes ſtriking a rock from which water actually iſſues, is alſo in a falſe taſte; for it is mixing reality with repreſentation: Moſes himſelf may bring

* See chap. 8.

water

water out of the rock, but this miracle is too much for his ſtatue. The ſame objection lies againſt a caſcade where we ſee the ſtatue of a water-god pouring out of his urn real water.

It is obſerved above of gardening, that it contributes to rectitude of manners, by inſpiring gaiety and benevolence. I add another obſervation, That both gardening and architecture contribute to the ſame end, by inſpiring neatneſs and elegance. It is obſerved in Scotland, that even a turnpike-road has ſome influence of this kind upon the low people in the neighbourhood. They acquire a taſte for regularity and neatneſs; which is diſplay'd firſt upon their yards and little incloſures, and next within doors. A taſte for regularity and neatneſs thus gathering ſtrength, comes inſenſibly to be extended to dreſs, and even to behaviour and manners.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

Standard of Taſte.

"THAT there is no diſputing about "taſte", meaning taſte in its moſt extenſive ſenſe, is a ſaying ſo generally received as to have become a proverb. One thing indeed is evident, that if the proverb hold true with reſpect to any one external ſenſe, it muſt hold true with reſpect to all. If the pleaſures of the palate diſdain a comparative trial and reject all criticiſm, the pleaſures of touch, of ſmell, of ſound, and even of ſight, muſt be equally privileged. At this rate, a man is not within the reach of cenſure, even where, inſenſible to beauty, grandeur, or elegance, he prefers the Saracen's head upon a ſign-poſt before the beſt tablature of Raphael, or a rude Gothic tower before the fineſt Grecian building: nor where he prefers the ſmell of a rotten

rotten carcaſs before that of the moſt odoriferous flower: nor jarring diſcords before the moſt exquiſite harmony.

But we muſt not ſtop here. If the pleaſures of external ſenſe be exempted from criticiſm, why not every one of our pleaſures, from whatever ſource derived? If taſte in the proper ſenſe of the word cannot be diſputed, there is as little room for diſputing it in its figurative ſenſe. The proverb accordingly comprehends both; and in that large ſenſe may be reſolved into the following general propoſition, That with reſpect to the ſenſitive part of our nature, by which ſome objects are agreeable ſome diſagreeable, there is not ſuch a thing as a *good* or *bad*, a *right* or *wrong*; that every man's taſte is to himſelf an ultimate ſtandard without appeal; and conſequently that there is no ground of cenſure againſt any one, if ſuch a one there be, who prefers Blackmore before Homer, ſelfiſhneſs before benevolence, or cowardice before magnanimity.

The proverb in the foregoing inſtances, is indeed carried very far. It ſeems difficult, however,

however, to ſap its foundation, or with ſucceſs to attack it from any quarter. For in comparing the various taſtes of individuals, it is not obvious what ſtandard muſt be appealed to. Is not every man equally a judge of what is agreeable or diſagreeable to himſelf? Doth it not ſeem odd, and perhaps abſurd, that a man *ought not* to be pleaſed when he is, or that he *ought* to be pleaſed when he is not?

This reaſoning may perplex, but, in contradiction to ſenſe and feeling, will never afford conviction. A man of taſte muſt neceſſarily feel the reaſoning to be falſe, however unqualified to detect the fallacy. At the ſame time, though no man of taſte will ſubſcribe to the proverb as holding true in every caſe, no man will venture to affirm that it holds true in no caſe. Subjects there are undoubtedly, that we may like or diſlike indifferently, without any imputation upon our taſte. Were a philoſopher to make a ſcale for human pleaſures with many diviſions, in order that the value of each pleaſure may be denoted by the place it occupies, he would not think of making di-

viſions without end, but would rank together many pleaſures ariſing perhaps from different objects, either as being equally valuable, or differing ſo imperceptibly as to make a ſeparation unneceſſary. Nature hath taken this courſe, ſo far as appears to the generality of mankind. There may be ſubdiviſions without end; but we are only ſenſible of the groſſer diviſions, comprehending each of them many pleaſures of various kinds. To theſe the proverb is applicable in the ſtricteſt ſenſe; for with reſpect to pleaſures of the ſame rank, what ground can there be for preferring one before another? If a preference in fact be given by any individual, it cannot be taſte, but cuſtom, imitation, or ſome peculiarity of mind.

Nature in her ſcale of pleaſures, has been ſparing of diviſions: ſhe hath wiſely and benevolently filled every diviſion with many pleaſures; in order that individuals may be contented with their own lot, without envying the happineſs of others: many hands muſt be employ'd to procure us the conveniencies of life; and it is neceſſary that the different

different branches of buſineſs, whether more or leſs agreeable, be filled with hands. A taſte too nice and delicate, would obſtruct this plan; for it would crowd ſome employments, leaving others, not leſs uſeful, totally neglected. In our preſent condition, happy it is, that the plurality are not delicate in their choice. They fall in readily with the occupations, pleaſures, food, and company, that fortune throws in their way; and if at firſt there be any diſpleaſing circumſtance, cuſtom ſoon makes it eaſy.

The proverb will be admitted ſo far as it regards the particulars now explained. But when apply'd in general to every ſubject of taſte, the difficulties to be encountered are inſuperable. What ſhall we ſay, in particular, as to the difficulty that ariſes from human nature itſelf? Do we not talk of a good and a bad taſte? of a right and a wrong taſte? and upon that ſuppoſition, do we not, with great confidence, cenſure writers, painters, architects, and every one who deals in the fine arts? Are ſuch criticiſms abſurd and void of foundation? Have the foregoing expreſſions, familiar in all lan-

guages and among all people, no ſort of meaning? This can hardly be: what is univerſal muſt have a foundation in nature. If we can reach this foundation, the ſtandard of taſte will no longer be a ſecret.

All living creatures are by nature diſtributed into claſſes; the individuals of each, however diverſified by ſlighter differences, having a wonderful uniformity in their capital parts internal and external. Each claſs is diſtinguiſhable from others by an external form; and not leſs diſtinguiſhable by an internal conſtitution, manifeſted by certain powers, feelings, deſires, and actions, peculiar to the individuals of each claſs. Thus each claſs may be conceived to have a common nature, which, in framing the individuals belonging to the claſs, is taken for a model or ſtandard.

Independent altogether of experience, men have a ſenſe or conviction of a common nature or ſtandard, not only in their own ſpecies, but in every ſpecies of animals. And hence it is a matter of wonder, to find any individual deviating from the common nature of the ſpecies, whether in its internal

nal or external conſtruction: a child born with an averſion to its mother's milk, is a matter of wonder, not leſs than if born without a mouth, or with more than one *.

With reſpect to this common nature or ſtandard, we are ſo conſtituted as to conceive it to be *perfect* or *right*; and conſequently that individuals *ought* to be made conformable to it. Every remarkable deviation accordingly from the ſtandard, makes an impreſſion upon us of imperfection, irregularity, or diſorder: it is diſagreeable and raiſes in us a painful emotion: monſtrous births, exciting the curioſity of a philoſopher, fail not at the ſame time to excite averſion in a high degree.

Laſtly, we have a conviction, that the common nature of man is invariable not leſs than univerſal: we conceive that it hath no relation to time nor to place; but that it will be the ſame hereafter as at preſent, and as it was in time paſt; the ſame among all nations and in all corners of the

* See Eſſays on morality and natural religion, part 1. eſſay 2. ch. 1.

earth.

earth. Nor are we deceived: giving allowance for the difference of culture and gradual refinement of manners, the fact correſponds to our conviction.

This conviction of a common nature or ſtandard, and of its perfection, is the foundation of morality; and accounts clearly for that remarkable conception we have, of a right and a wrong taſte in morals. It accounts not leſs clearly for the conception we have of a right and a wrong taſte in the fine arts. A perſon who rejects objects generally agreeable, and delights in objects generally diſagreeable, is condemned as a monſter: we diſapprove his taſte as bad or wrong; and we have a clear conception that he deviates from the common ſtandard. If man were ſo framed as not to have any notion of a common ſtandard, the proverb mentioned in the beginning would hold univerſally, not only in the fine arts but in morals: upon that ſuppoſition, the taſte of every man, with reſpect to both, would to himſelf be an ultimate ſtandard. But the conviction of a common ſtandard being made a part of our nature, we intuitively conceive a taſte to be right or good if conformable

formable to the common ſtandard, and wrong or bad if diſconformable.

No particular concerning human nature is more univerſal, than the uneaſineſs a man feels when in matters of importance his opinions are rejected by others. Why ſhould difference in opinion create uneaſineſs, more than difference in ſtature, in countenance, or in dreſs? The ſenſe of a common ſtandard is the only principle that can explain this myſtery. Every man, generally ſpeaking, taking it for granted that his opinions agree with the common ſenſe of mankind, is therefore diſguſted with thoſe of a contrary opinion, not as differing from him, but as differing from the common ſtandard. Hence in all diſputes, we find the parties, each of them equally, appealing conſtantly to the common ſenſe of mankind as the ultimate rule or ſtandard. Were it not for this ſtandard, of which the conviction is univerſal, I cannot diſcover the ſlighteſt foundation for rancor or animoſity when perſons differ in eſſential points more than in points purely indifferent. With reſpect to the latter, which are not ſuppoſed to be regulated by

by any ſtandard, individuals are permitted to think for themſelves with impunity. The ſame liberty is not indulged with reſpect to the former: for what reaſon, other than that the ſtandard by which theſe are regulated, ought, as we judge, to produce an uniformity of opinion in all men? In a word, to this ſenſe of a common ſtandard muſt be wholly attributed the pleaſure we take in thoſe who eſpouſe the ſame principles and opinions with ourſelves, as well as the averſion we have at thoſe who differ from us. In matters left indifferent by the ſtandard, we find nothing of the ſame pleaſure or pain. A bookiſh man, unleſs ſway'd by convenience, reliſheth not the contemplative more than the active part of mankind: his friends and companions are choſen indifferently out of either claſs. A painter conſorts with a poet or muſician, as readily as with thoſe of his own art; and one is not the more agreeable to me for loving beef, as I do, nor the leſs agreeable for preferring mutton.

I have ſaid, that my diſguſt is raiſed, not by differing from me, but by differing from

from what I judge to be the common ſtandard. This point, being of importance, ought to be firmly eſtabliſhed. Men, it is true, are prone to flatter themſelves, by taking it for granted, that their opinions and their taſte are in all reſpects agreeable to the common ſtandard. But there may be exceptions, and experience ſhows there are ſome. There are inſtances without number, of perſons who cling to the groſſer amuſements of gaming, eating, drinking, without having any reliſh for more elegant pleaſures, ſuch, for example, as are afforded by the fine arts. Yet theſe very perſons, talking the ſame language with the reſt of mankind, pronounce in favour of the more elegant pleaſures: they invariably approve thoſe who have a more refined taſte, and are aſhamed of their own as low and ſenſual. It is in vain to think of giving a reaſon for this ſingular impartiality againſt ſelf, other than the authority of the common ſtandard. Every individual of the human ſpecies, the moſt groveling not excepted, hath a natural ſenſe of the dignity of human nature*.

* See chap. 11.

Hence every man is eſteemed and reſpected in proportion to the dignity of his character, ſentiments, and actions. And from the inſtances now given we diſcover, that the ſenſe of the dignity of human nature is ſo vigorous, as even to prevail over ſelf-partiality, and to make us deſpiſe our own taſte compared with the more elevated taſte of others.

In our ſenſe of a common ſtandard and in the pleaſure individuals give us by their conformity to it, a curious final cauſe is diſcovered. An uniformity of taſte and ſentiment in matters of importance, forms an intimate connection among individuals, and is a great bleſſing in the ſocial ſtate. With reſpect to morals in particular, unhappy it would be for mankind did not this uniformity prevail: it is neceſſary that the actions of all men be uniform with reſpect to right and wrong; and in order to uniformity of action, it is neceſſary that all men think the ſame way in theſe particulars: if they differ through any irregular bias, the common ſenſe of mankind is appealed to as the rule; and it is the province of judges,

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in matters eſpecially of equity, to apply that rule. The ſame uniformity, it is yielded, is not ſo ſtrictly neceſſary in other matters of taſte: men, though connected in general as members of the ſame ſtate, are, by birth, office, or occupation, ſeparated and diſtinguiſhed into different claſſes; and are thereby qualified for different amuſements: variety of taſte, ſo far, is no obſtruction to the general connection. But with reſpect to the more capital pleaſures, ſuch as are beſt enjoy'd in common, uniformity of taſte is neceſſary for two great ends, firſt to connect individuals the more intimately in the ſocial life, and next to advance theſe pleaſures to their higheſt perfection. With reſpect to the firſt, if inſtead of a common taſte, every man had a taſte peculiar to himſelf, leading him to place his happineſs upon things indifferent or perhaps diſagreeable to others, theſe capital pleaſures could not be enjoy'd in common: every man would purſue his own happineſs by flying from others; and inſtead of a natural tendency to union, remarkable in the human ſpecies, union would be our

averſion: man would not be a conſiſtent being: his intereſt would lead him to ſociety, and his taſte would draw him from it. The other end will be beſt explained by entering upon particulars. Uniformity of taſte gives opportunity for ſumptuous and elegant buildings, for fine gardens, and extenſive embelliſhments, which pleaſe univerſally. Works of this nature could never have reached any degree of perfection, had every man a taſte peculiar to himſelf: there could not be any ſuitable reward, either of profit or honour, to encourage men of genius to labour in ſuch works. The ſame uniformity of taſte is equally neceſſary to perfect the arts of muſic, ſculpture, and painting; and to ſupport the expence they require after they are brought to perfection. Nature is in every particular conſiſtent with herſelf. We are formed by nature to have a high reliſh for the fine arts, which are a great ſource of happineſs, and extremely friendly to virtue. We are, at the ſame time, formed with an uniformity of taſte, to furniſh proper objects for this high reliſh: if uniformity of taſte did not prevail, the fine

fine arts could never have made any figure.

Thus, upon a ſenſe common to the ſpecies, is erected a ſtandard of taſte, which without heſitation is apply'd to the taſte of every individual. This ſtandard, aſcertaining what actions are right what wrong, what proper what improper, hath enabled moraliſts to eſtabliſh rules for our conduct from which no perſon is allowed to ſwerve. We have the ſame ſtandard for aſcertaining in all the fine arts, what is beautiful or ugly, high or low, proper or improper, proportioned or diſproportioned. And here, as in morals, we juſtly condemn every taſte that ſwerves from what is thus aſcertained by the common ſtandard.

The diſcovery of a rule or ſtandard for trying the taſte of individuals in the fine arts as well as in morals, is a conſiderable advance, but completes not our journey. We have a great way yet to travel. It is made out that there is a ſtandard: but it is not made out, by what means we ſhall prevent miſtaking a falſe ſtandard for that of nature. If from opinion and practice we endeavour to aſcertain the ſtandard of nature,

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we are betray'd into endleſs perplexities. Viewing this matter hiſtorically, nothing appears more various and more wavering than taſte in the fine arts. If we judge by numbers, the Gothic taſte of architecture will be preferred before that of Greece; and the Chineſe taſte probably before both. It would be endleſs, to recount the various taſtes of gardening that have prevailed in different ages, and ſtill prevail in different countries. Deſpiſing the modeſt colouring of nature, women of faſhion in France daub their cheeks with a red powder. Nay, the unnatural ſwelling in the neck, a diſeaſe peculiar to the inhabitants of the Alps, is reliſhed by that people. But we ought not to be diſcouraged by ſuch untoward inſtances. For do we not find the like contradictions with reſpect to morals? was it not once held lawful, for a man to expoſe his infant children, and, when grown up, to ſell them for ſlaves? was it not held equally lawful, to puniſh children for the crime of their parents? was not the murder of an enemy in cold blood an univerſal practice? what ſtronger inſtance can be given,

ven, than the abominable practice of human ſacrifices, not leſs impious than immoral? Such aberrations from the rules of morality, prove only, that men, originally ſavage and brutiſh, acquire not rationality or any delicacy of taſte, till they be long diſciplined in ſociety. To aſcertain the rules of morality, we appeal not to the common ſenſe of ſavages, but of men in their more perfect ſtate: and we make the ſame appeal, in forming the rules that ought to govern the fine arts. In neither can we ſafely rely on a local or tranſitory taſte; but on what is the moſt univerſal and the moſt laſting among polite nations.

In this very manner, a ſtandard for morals has been eſtabliſhed with a good deal of accuracy; and ſo well fitted for practice, that in the hand of able judges it is daily apply'd with general ſatisfaction. The ſtandard of taſte in the fine arts, is not yet brought to ſuch perfection. And there is an obvious reaſon for its ſlower progreſs. The ſenſe of a right and a wrong in action, is conſpicuous in the breaſt of every individual, almoſt without exception. The ſenſe of a right

right and a wrong in the fine arts, is more faint and wavering: it is by nature a tender plant, requiring much culture to bring it to maturity: in a barren ſoil it cannot live; and in any ſoil, without cultivation, it is weak and ſickly. I talk chiefly with relation to its more refined objects: for ſome objects make ſuch lively impreſſions of beauty, grandeur, and proportion, as without exception to command the general taſte. There appears to me great contrivance, in diſtinguiſhing thus the moral ſenſe from a taſte in the fine arts. The former, as a rule of conduct and as a law we ought to obey, muſt be clear and authoritative. The latter is not intitled to the ſame authority, ſince it contributes to our pleaſure and amuſement only. Were it more ſtrong and lively, it would uſurp upon our duty, and call off the attention from matters of greater moment. Were it more clear and authoritative, it would baniſh all difference of taſte: a refined taſte would not form a character, nor be intitled to eſteem. This would put an end to rivalſhip, and conſequently to all improvement.

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But to return to our ſubject. However languid and cloudy the common ſenſe of mankind may be with reſpect to the fine arts, it is yet the only ſtandard in theſe as well as in morals. And when the matter is attentively conſidered, this ſtandard will be found leſs imperfect than it appears to be at firſt ſight. In gathering the common ſenſe of mankind upon morals, we may ſafely conſult every individual. But with reſpect to the fine arts, our method muſt be different: a wary choice is neceſſary; for to collect votes indifferently, will certainly miſlead us: thoſe who depend for food on bodily labour, are totally void of taſte; of ſuch a taſte at leaſt as can be of uſe in the fine arts. This conſideration bars the greater part of mankind; and of the remaining part, many have their taſte corrupted to ſuch a degree as to unqualify them altogether for voting. The common ſenſe of mankind muſt then be confined to the few that fall not under theſe exceptions. But as ſuch ſelection ſeems to throw matters again into uncertainty, we muſt be more explicit upon this branch of our ſubject.

Nothing tends more than voluptuouſneſs to corrupt the whole internal frame, and to vitiate our taſte, not only in the fine arts, but even in morals. It never fails, in courſe of time, to extinguiſh all the ſympathetic affections, and to bring on a beaſtly ſelfiſhneſs which leaves nothing of man but the ſhape. About excluding perſons of this ſtamp there will be no diſpute. Let us next bring under trial, the opulent whoſe chief pleaſure is expence. Riches, coveted by moſt men for the ſake of ſuperiority and to command reſpect, are generally beſtow'd upon coſtly furniture, numerous attendants, a princely dwelling, every thing ſuperb and gorgeous, to amaze and humble all beholders. Simplicity, elegance, propriety, and every thing natural, ſweet, or amiable, are deſpiſed or neglected; for theſe are not at the command of riches, and make no figure in the public eye. In a word, nothing is reliſhed, but what ſerves to gratify pride, by an imagined exaltation of the poſſeſſor above thoſe he reckons the vulgar. Such a tenor of life contracts the heart and makes every principle give way to ſelf-intereſt. Benevolence

lence and public ſpirit, with all their refined emotions, are little felt and leſs regarded. And if theſe be excluded, there can be no place for the faint and delicate emotions of the fine arts.

The excluſion of claſſes ſo many and various, reduces within a narrow compaſs thoſe who are qualified to be judges in the fine arts. Many circumſtances are neceſſary to form a judge of this ſort: there muſt be a good natural taſte: this taſte muſt be improved by education, reflection, and experience: it muſt be preſerved alive, by a regular courſe of life, by uſing the goods of fortune with moderation, and by following the dictates of improved nature which gives welcome to every rational pleaſure without deviating into exceſs. This is the tenor of life which of all contributes the moſt to refinement of taſte; and the ſame tenor of life contributes the moſt to happineſs in general.

If there appear much uncertainty in a ſtandard that requires ſo painful and intricate a ſelection, we may poſſibly be reconciled to it by the following conſideration, That,

with reſpect to the fine arts, there is leſs difference of taſte than is commonly imagined. Nature hath marked all her works with indelible characters of high or low, plain or elegant, ſtrong or weak. Theſe, if at all perceived, are ſeldom miſapprehended by any taſte; and the ſame marks are equally perceptible in works of art. A defective taſte is incurable; and it hurts none but the poſſeſſor, becauſe it carries no authority to impoſe upon others. I know not if there be ſuch a thing as a taſte naturally bad or wrong; a taſte, for example, that prefers a groveling pleaſure before one that is high and elegant. Groveling pleaſures are never preferred: they are only made welcome by thoſe who know no better. Differences about objects of taſte, it is true, are endleſs: but they generally concern trifles, or poſſibly matters of equal rank where the preference may be given either way with impunity. If, on any occaſion, the diſpute go deeper and perſons differ where they ought not, a depraved taſte will readily be diſcovered on one or other ſide, occaſioned by imitation,

imitation, cuſtom, or corrupted manners, ſuch as are deſcribed above.

If, after all that is ſaid, the ſtandard of taſte be thought not yet ſufficiently aſcertained, there is ſtill one reſource in which I put great confidence. What I have in view, are the principles that conſtitute the ſenſitive part of our nature. By means of theſe principles, common to all men, a wonderful uniformity is preſerved among the emotions and feelings of different individuals; the ſame object making upon every perſon the ſame impreſſion; the ſame in kind, at leaſt, if not in degree. There have been aberrations, as above obſerved, from theſe principles; but ſoon or late they always prevail, by reſtoring the wanderers to the right track. The uniformity of taſte here accounted for, is the very thing that in other words is termed the common ſenſe of mankind. And this diſcovery leads us to means for aſcertaining the common ſenſe of mankind or the ſtandard of taſte, more unerringly than the ſelection above inſiſted on. Every doubt with relation to this ſtandard, occaſioned by the practice of different nations

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and different times, may be cleared by applying to the principles that ought to govern the taſte of every individual. In a word, a thorough acquaintance with theſe principles will enable us to form the ſtandard of taſte; and to lay a foundation for this valuable branch of knowledge, is the declared purpoſe of the preſent undertaking.

APPEN-

APPENDIX.

Terms defined or explained.

1. CONSIDERING the things I am conſcious of, ſome are internal or within my mind, ſome external or without. Paſſion, thinking, volition, are internal objects. Objects of ſight, of hearing, of ſmell, of touch, of taſte, are external.

2. The faculty by which I diſcover an internal object, is termed an internal ſenſe: the faculty by which I diſcover an external object, is termed an external ſenſe. This diſtinction among the ſenſes is made with reference to their objects merely; for the ſenſes, external and internal, are equally powers or faculties of the mind.

3. But as ſelf is an object, and the only one that cannot be termed either external or

or internal, the faculty by which I am conſcious of myſelf, muſt be diſtinguiſhed from both the internal and external ſenſes.

4. By ſight we perceive the qualities of figure, colour, motion, *&c.*: by the ear we perceive the qualities high, low, loud, ſoft: by touch we perceive rough, ſmooth, hot, cold, *&c.*: by taſte we perceive ſweet, ſour, bitter, *&c.*: by ſmell we perceive fragrant, ſtinking, *&c.* Qualities, from our very conception of them, are not capable of an independent exiſtence; but muſt belong to ſomething of which they are the qualities. A thing with reſpect to its qualities is termed a ſubject, or *ſubſtratum*; becauſe its qualities reſt, as it were, upon it, or are founded upon it. The ſubject or *ſubſtratum* of viſible qualities, is termed *ſubſtance*, of audible qualities, *ſound*; of tangible qualities, *body*. In like manner, *taſte* is the *ſubſtratum* of qualities perceived by our ſenſe of taſting; and *ſmell* is the *ſubſtratum* of qualities perceived by our ſenſe of ſmelling.

5. Subſtance and ſound are perceived exiſting in a certain place; often at a conſiderable

derable diſtance from the organ. But ſmell, touch, and taſte, are perceived at the organs of ſenſe.

6. Objects of internal ſenſe are conceived to be attributes: deliberation, reaſoning, reſolution, willing, conſenting, are internal actions: paſſions and emotions are internal agitations. With regard to the former, I am conſcious of being active; with regard to the latter, I am conſcious of being paſſive.

7. Again, we are conſcious of internal action as in the head; of paſſions and emotions as in the heart.

8. Many actions may be exerted internally and many effects produced, of which we are not conſcious. When we inveſtigate the ultimate cauſe of animal motions, it is the moſt probable opinion, that they proceed from ſome internal power: and if ſo, we are, in this particular, unconſcious of our own operations. But conſciouſneſs being imply'd in the very conception of deliberating, reaſoning, reſolving, willing, conſenting, theſe operations cannot go on without our knowledge. The ſame is the caſe

of paſſions and emotions; for no internal agitation is denominated a paſſion or emotion, but what we are conſcious of.

9. The mind is not always in the ſame ſtate: it is at times chearful, melancholy, ſevere, peeviſh. Theſe different ſtates may not improperly be denominated *tones*. An object, by making an impreſſion, produceth an emotion or paſſion, which again gives the mind a certain tone ſuited to it.

10. *Perception* and *ſenſation* are commonly reckoned ſynonymous terms, ſignifying the conſciouſneſs we have of objects; but, in accurate language, they are diſtinguiſhed. The conſciouſneſs we have of external objects, is termed *perception*. Thus we are ſaid to perceive a certain animal, a certain colour, ſound, taſte, ſmell, *&c.* The conſciouſneſs we have of pleaſure or pain ariſing from external objects, is termed *ſenſation*. Thus we have a ſenſation of cold, of heat, of the pain of a wound, of the pleaſure of a landſcape, of muſic, of beauty, of propriety, of behaviour, *&c.* The conſciouſneſs we have of internal action, ſuch as deliberation, reſolution, choice, is never

never termed either a perception or a ſenſation.

11. *Conception* ought to be diſtinguiſhed from perception. External things and their attributes are objects of perception: relations among things are objects of conception. I ſee two men, James and John: the conſciouſneſs I have of them is a perception: but the conſciouſneſs I have of their relation as father and ſon, is termed a *conception*. Again, perception relates to objects really exiſting: conception to fictitious objects, or to thoſe framed by the imagination.

12. *Feeling*, beſide denoting one of the external ſenſes, has two different ſignifications. Of theſe the moſt common includes not only ſenſation, but alſo that branch of conſciouſneſs which relates to paſſions and emotions: it is proper to ſay, I have a feeling of cold, of heat, or of pain; and it is not leſs proper to ſay, I have a feeling of love, of hatred, of anger, or of any other paſſion. But it is not applied to internal action: for it is not proper to ſay, that a man feels himſelf deliberating or reſolving. In a ſenſe leſs common, feeling is put for the thing that is felt; and in this ſenſe it is a general

term for every one of our paſſions and emotions.

13. That we cannot perceive an external object till an impreſſion be made upon our body, is probable from reaſon, and is aſcertained by experience. But it is not neceſſary that we be made ſenſible of the impreſſion. It is true, that in touching, taſting, and ſmelling, we feel the impreſſion made at the organ of ſenſe: but in ſeeing and hearing, we feel no impreſſion. We know indeed by experience, that before we perceive a viſible object, its image is ſpread upon the *retina tunica*; and that before we perceive a ſound, an impreſſion is made upon the drum of the ear: and yet here, we are not conſcious either of the organic image or the organic impreſſion: nor are we conſcious of any other operation preparatory to the act of perception. All we can ſay, is, that we ſee that river, or hear that trumpet *.

14. Objects

* Yet a ſingular opinion that impreſſions are the only objects of perception, has been eſpouſed by ſome philoſophers of no mean rank; not attending to the foregoing peculiarity in the ſenſes

14. Objects once perceived may be recalled to the mind by the power of memory. When I recall an object in this manner, it appears to me the same as in the original survey, only more faint and obscure. For example, I saw yesterday a spreading oak growing on the brink of a river. I endeavour to recall it to my mind. How is this operation performed? Do I endeavour to form in my mind a picture of it or representative image? Not so. I transport myself ideally to the place where I saw the tree yesterday; upon which I have a perception of the tree and river, similar in all respects to the perception I had of it when I viewed it with my eyes, only more obscure. And in this recollection, I am not conscious of a picture or representative image, more than in the original survey: the perception is of

senses of seeing and hearing, that we perceive objects without being conscious of an organic impression or of any impression. See the treatise upon human nature, where we find the following passage, book 1. p. 4. sect. 2. "Properly speaking it is "not our body we perceive when we regard our limbs and "members; so that the ascribing a real and corporeal exist-"ence to these impressions or to their objects, is an act of the "mind as difficult to explain," &c.

the

the tree itſelf, as at firſt. I confirm this by another experiment. After attentively ſurveying a fine ſtatue, I cloſe my eyes. What follows? The ſame object continues, without any difference but that it is leſs diſtinct than formerly. This indiſtinct ſecondary perception of an object, is termed *an idea*. And therefore the preciſe and accurate definition of an idea, in contradiſtinction to an original perception, is, "That perception "or conſciouſneſs of a real object, which a "perſon has by exerciſing the power of "memory." Every thing one is conſcious of, whether internal or external, paſſions, emotions, thinking, reſolving, willing, heat, cold, *&c.* as well as external objects, may be recalled as above by the power of memory *.

15. The

* From this definition of an idea, the following propoſition muſt be evident, That there can be no ſuch thing as an innate idea. If the original perception of an object be not innate, which is obvious, it is not leſs obvious, that the idea or ſecondary perception of that object cannot be innate. And yet to prove this ſelf-evident propoſition, Locke has beſtowed a whole book of his treatiſe upon human underſtanding. So neceſſary it is to give accurate definitions, and ſo preventive of diſpute

15. The original perceptions of external objects, are either ſimple or complex. A ſound may be ſo ſimple as not to be reſolvable into parts: ſo may a taſte and a ſmell. A perception of touch, is generally compounded of the more ſimple perceptions of hardneſs or ſoftneſs, joined with ſmoothneſs or roughneſs, heat or cold, *&c.* But of all the perceptions of external ſenſe, that of a viſible object is the moſt complex; becauſe the eye takes in more particulars than any other organ. A tree is compoſed of its trunk, branches, leaves: it has colour, figure, ſize: every one of theſe ſeparately produceth a perception in the mind of the ſpectator, which are all combined into the complex perception of the tree.

16. The original perception of an object of ſight, is more complete, lively, and diſtinct, than that of any other external ſenſe; and for that reaſon, an idea or ſecondary

diſpute are definitions when accurate. Dr Berkeley has taken great pains to prove another propoſition equally evident, That there can be no ſuch thing as a general idea. All our original perceptions are of particular objects, and our ſecondary perceptions or ideas muſt be equally ſo.

perception

perception of a viſible object, is more diſtinct and lively than that of any other object. A fine paſſage in muſic, may, for a moment, be recalled to the mind with tolerable accuracy: but the idea of any other object, and alſo of ſound after the ſhorteſt interval, is extremely obſcure.

17. As the range of an individual is commonly within narrow bounds of ſpace, opportunities ſeldom offer of an enlarged acquaintance with external objects. Original perceptions therefore, and their correſponding ideas, are a proviſion too ſcanty for the purpoſes of life. Language is an admirable contrivance for ſupplying this deficiency; for by language, the original perceptions of each individual may be communicated to all; and the ſame may be done by painting and other imitative arts. It is natural to ſuppoſe, that the moſt lively ideas are the moſt ſuſceptible of being communicated to others. This holds more eſpecially when language is the vehicle of communication; for language hitherto has not arrived at any greater perfection than to expreſs clear and lively ideas. Hence it is, that poets and orators,

rators, who are extremely ſucceſsful in deſcribing objects of ſight, find objects of the other ſenſes too faint and obſcure for language. An idea thus acquired of an object at ſecond hand, ought to be diſtinguiſhed from an idea of memory; though their reſemblance has occaſioned the ſame term to be apply'd to both. This is to be regretted; for when knowledge is to be communicated by language, ambiguity in the ſignification of words is a great obſtruction to accuracy of conception. Thus nature hath furniſhed the means of multiplying ideas without end, and of providing every individual with a ſufficient ſtock to anſwer, not only the neceſſities, but even the elegancies of life.

18. Further, man is endued with a ſort of creative power: he can fabricate images of things that have no exiſtence. The materials employ'd in this operation, are ideas of ſight, which may be taken to pieces and combined into new forms at pleaſure: their complexity and vivacity make them fit materials. But a man has no ſuch power over any of his other ideas, whether of the external or in-

ternal ſenſes: he cannot, after the utmoſt effort, combine theſe into new forms: his ideas of ſuch objects are too obſcure for this operation. An image thus fabricated cannot be called a ſecondary perception, not being derived from an original perception: the poverty of language however, as in the caſe immediately above mentioned, has occaſioned the ſame term *idea* to be apply'd to all. This ſingular power of fabricating images independent of real objects, is diſtinguiſhed by the name *imagination*.

19. As ideas are the chief materials employ'd in thinking, reaſoning, and reflecting, it is of conſequence that their nature and differences be underſtood. It appears now, that ideas may be diſtinguiſhed into three kinds; firſt, Ideas or ſecondary perceptions, properly termed *ideas of memory*; ſecond, Ideas communicated by language or other ſigns; and, third, Ideas of imagination. Theſe ideas differ from each other in many reſpects; but the chief foundation of the diſtinction is the difference of their cauſes. The firſt kind are derived from real exiſtences that have been objects of our ſenſes:

ſenſes: language is the cauſe of the ſecond, or any other ſign that has the ſame power with language; and a man's imagination is to himſelf the cauſe of the third. It is ſcarce neceſſary to add, that an idea, originally of imagination, being convey'd to others by language or any other vehicle, becomes in the mind of thoſe to whom it is convey'd an idea of the ſecond kind; and again, that an idea of this kind, being afterward recalled to the mind, becomes in that circumſtance an idea of memory.

20. Human nature is not ſo conſtituted, as that its objects are perceived with indifferency: theſe, with very few exceptions, raiſe in us either pleaſant or painful emotions. External objects, at the ſame time, appear in themſelves agreeable or diſagreeable; but with ſome difference betwixt thoſe which produce organic impreſſions, and thoſe which affect us from a diſtance. When we touch a ſoft and ſmooth body, we have a pleaſant feeling as at the place of contact; and this feeling we diſtinguiſh not, at leaſt not accurately, from the agreeableneſs of the body itſelf. The ſame holds

in general with regard to all the organic impreſſions. It is otherwiſe in hearing and ſeeing. A ſound is perceived as in itſelf agreeable; and, at the ſame time, raiſes in the hearer a pleaſant emotion: an object of ſight appears in itſelf agreeable; and, at the ſame time, raiſes in the ſeer a pleaſant emotion. Theſe are accurately diſtinguiſhed. The pleaſant emotion is felt as within the mind: the agreeableneſs of the object is placed upon the object, and is perceived as one of its qualities or properties. The agreeable appearance of an object of ſight, is termed *beauty*; and the diſagreeable appearance of ſuch an object is termed *uglineſs*.

21. But though beauty and uglineſs, in their proper and genuine ſignification, are confined to objects of ſight; yet in a more lax and figurative ſignification, they are apply'd to objects of the other ſenſes. They are ſometimes apply'd even to abſtract terms; for it is not unuſual to ſay, *a beautiful theorem, a beautiful conſtitution of government*. But I am inclined to think, that we are led to uſe ſuch expreſſion by conceiving the

the thing as delineated upon paper, and as in ſome ſort an object of ſight.

22. A line compoſed by a preciſe rule, is perceived and ſaid to be regular. A ſtraight line, a parabola, a hyperbola, the circumference of a circle, and of an ellipſe, are all of them regular lines. A figure compoſed by a preciſe rule, is perceived and ſaid to be regular. Thus a circle, a ſquare, a hexagon, an equilateral triangle, are regular figures, being compoſed by a rule that determines the form of each. When the form of a line or of a figure is aſcertained by a rule that leaves nothing arbitrary, the line and the figure are ſaid to be perfectly regular: this is the caſe of the figures now mentioned; and it is the caſe of a ſtraight line and of the circumference of a circle. A figure and a line are not perfectly regular where any part or circumſtance is left arbitrary. A parallelogram and a rhomb are leſs regular than a ſquare: the parallelogram is ſubjected to no rule as to the length of ſides, other than that the oppoſite ſides be equal: the rhomb is ſubjected to no rule as to its angles, other than that the oppoſite angles be equal.

equal. For the ſame reaſon, the circumference of an ellipſe, the form of which is ſuſceptible of much variety, is leſs regular than that of a circle.

23. Regularity, properly ſpeaking, belongs, like beauty, to objects of ſight: like beauty, it is alſo apply'd figuratively to other objects. Thus we ſay, *a regular government*, *a regular compoſition of muſic*, and, *regular diſcipline*.

24. When two figures are compoſed of ſimilar parts, they are ſaid to be uniform. Perfect uniformity is where the conſtituent parts of two figures are preciſely ſimilar to each other. Thus two cubes of the ſame dimenſions are perfectly uniform in all their parts. An imperfect uniformity is, where the parts mutually correſpond, but without being preciſely ſimilar. The uniformity is imperfect betwixt two ſquares or cubes of unequal dimenſions; and ſtill more ſo betwixt a ſquare and a parallelogram.

25. Uniformity is alſo applicable to the conſtituent parts of the ſame figure. The conſtituent parts of a ſquare are perfectly uniform: its ſides are equal and its angles are

are equal. Wherein then differs regularity from uniformity? for a figure compoſed of ſimilar or uniform parts muſt undoubtedly be regular. Regularity is predicated of a figure conſidered as a whole compoſed of reſembling or uniform parts: uniformity again is predicated of theſe parts as related to each other by reſemblance. We ſay, a ſquare is a regular, not an uniform figure: but with reſpect to the conſtituent parts of a ſquare, we ſay not that they are regular, but that they are uniform.

26. In things deſtined for the ſame uſe, as legs, arms, eyes, windows, ſpoons, we expect uniformity. Proportion ought to govern parts intended for different uſes. We require a certain proportion betwixt a leg and an arm; in the baſe, the ſhaft, the capital, of a pillar; and in the length, the breadth, the height, of a room. Some proportion is alſo required in different things intimately connected, as betwixt a dwelling-houſe, the garden, and the ſtables. But we require no proportion among things ſlightly connected, as betwixt the table a man writes on and the dog that follows him.

Proportion

Proportion and uniformity never coincide: things perfectly ſimilar are uniform; but proportion is never applied to them: the four ſides and angles of a ſquare are equal and perfectly uniform; but we ſay not that they are proportional. Thus, proportion always implies inequality or difference; but then it implies it to a certain degree only: the moſt agreeable proportion reſembles a *maximum* in mathematics; a greater or leſs inequality or difference is leſs agreeable.

27. Order regards various particulars. Firſt, in tracing or ſurveying objects, we are directed by a ſenſe of order: we conceive it to be more orderly, that we ſhould paſs from a principle to its acceſſories and from a whole to its parts, than in the contrary direction. Next, with reſpect to the poſition of things, a ſenſe of order directs us to place together things intimately connected. Thirdly, in placing things that have no natural connection, that order appears the moſt perfect, where the particulars are made to bear the ſtrongeſt relation to each other that poſition can give them. Thus paralleliſm is the ſtrongeſt relation that

that poſition can beſtow upon ſtraight lines. If they be ſo placed as by production to interſect each other, the relation is leſs perfect. A large body in the middle and two equal bodies of leſs ſize, one on each ſide, is an order that produces the ſtrongeſt relation the bodies are ſuſceptible of by poſition. The relation betwixt the two equal bodies would be ſtronger by juxtapoſition; but they would not both have the ſame relation to the third.

28. The beauty or agreeableneſs of an object, as it enters into the original perception, enters alſo into the ſecondary perception or idea. An idea of imagination is alſo agreeable; though in a lower degree than an idea of memory, where the objects are of the ſame kind. But this defect in the ideas of imagination is abundantly ſupply'd by their greatneſs and variety. For the imagination acting without control, can fabricate ideas of finer viſible objects, of more noble and heroic actions, of greater wickedneſs, of more ſurpriſing events, than ever in fact exiſted. And by communicating theſe ideas in words, painting, ſculpture,

&c. the influence of the imagination is not leſs extenſive than great.

29. In the nature of every man, there is ſomewhat original, that ſerves to diſtinguiſh him from others, that tends to form a character, and, with the concurrence of external accidents, to make him meek or fiery, candid or deceitful, reſolute or timorous, chearful or moroſe. This original bent is termed *diſpoſition*. Which muſt be diſtinguiſhed from a *principle:* no original bent obtains the latter appellation, but what belongs to the whole ſpecies. A principle makes part of the common nature of man: a diſpoſition makes part of the nature of this or that man. A *propenſity* comprehends both; for it ſignifies indifferently either a principle or a diſpoſition.

30. *Affection*, ſignifying a ſettled bent of mind toward a particular being or thing, occupies a middle place betwixt propenſity on the one hand, and paſſion on the other. A propenſity being original, muſt exiſt before any opportunity be offered to exert it: affection can never be original; becauſe, having a ſpecial relation to a particular object, it

it cannot exiſt till the object be preſented. Again, paſſion depends on the preſence of the object, in idea at leaſt, if not in reality: when the idea vaniſhes, the paſſion vaniſhes with it. Affection, on the contrary, once ſettled on a perſon, is a laſting connection; and, like other connections, ſubſiſts even when we do not think of it. A familiar example will clear the whole. There may be in the mind a propenſity to gratitude, which, through want of an object, happens never to be exerted, and which therefore is never diſcovered even by the perſon who has it. Another who has the ſame propenſity, meets with a kindly office that makes him grateful to his benefactor: an intimate connection is formed betwixt them, termed *affection*; which, like other connections, has a permanent exiſtence, though not always in view. The affection, for the moſt part, lies dormant, till an opportunity offer of exerting it: in this circumſtance, it is converted into the paſſion of gratitude; and the opportunity is greedily ſeized for teſtifying gratitude in the moſt complete manner.

31. *Averſion*, I think, muſt be oppoſed

to affection, and not to desire, as it commonly is. We have an affection for one person; we have an aversion to another: the former disposes us to do good to its object, the latter to do ill.

32. What is a sentiment? It is not a perception; for a perception signifies our consciousness of external objects. It is not consciousness of an internal action; such as thinking, suspending thought, inclining, resolving, willing, &c. Neither is it a conception of relation amongst objects or of their differences: a conception of this kind, is termed *opinion*. The term *sentiment* is appropriated to those thoughts that are suggested by a passion or emotion.

33. *Attention* is that state of mind which prepares a man to receive impressions. According to the degree of attention, objects make a stronger or weaker impression *. In

* Bacon, in his natural history, makes the following observations. Sounds are meliorated by the intension of the sense, where the common sense is collected most to the particular sense of hearing, and the sight suspended. Therefore sounds are sweeter, as well as greater, in the night than in the day: and I suppose they are sweeter to blind men than to others: and

In an indolent ſtate, or in a reverie, objects make but a ſlight impreſſion; far from what they make when they command our attention. In a train of perceptions, no ſingle object makes ſuch a figure as it would do ſingle and apart: for when the attention is divided among many objects, no ſingle object is intitled to a large ſhare. Hence the ſtillneſs of night contributes to terror, there being nothing to divert the attention.

Horror ubique animos, ſimul ipſa ſilentia terrent.
Æneid. 2.

Zara. Silence and ſolitude are ev'ry where!
Through all the gloomy ways and iron doors
That hither lead, nor human face nor voice
Is ſeen or heard A dreadful din was wont
To grate the ſenſe, when enter'd here, from groans
And howls of ſlaves condemn'd, from clink of chains,
And craſh of ruſty bars and creeking hinges:
And ever and anon the ſight was daſh'd
With frightful faces and the meagre looks
Of grim and ghaſtly executioners.

and it is manifeſt that between ſleeping and waking, when all the ſenſes are bound and ſuſpended, muſic is far ſweeter than when one is fully waking.

Yet

Yet more this ſtillneſs terrifies my ſoul
Than did that ſcene of complicated horrors.
Mourning Bride, act 5. ſc. 8.

And hence it is, that an object ſeen at the termination of a confined view, is more agreeable than when ſeen in a group with the ſurrounding objects.

The crow doth ſing as ſweetly as the lark
When neither is attended; and, I think,
The nightingale, if ſhe ſhould ſing by day,
When ev'ry gooſe is cackling, would be thought
No better a muſician than the wren.
Merchant of Venice.

34. In matters of ſlight importance, attention, in a great meaſure, is directed by will; and for that reaſon, it is our own fault if trifling objects make any deep impreſſion. Had we power equally to with-hold our attention from matters of importance, we might be proof againſt any deep impreſſion. But our power fails us here: an intereſting object ſeizes and fixes the attention beyond the poſſibility of control; and while our attention is thus forcibly attached by one object,

ject, others may ſolicit for admittance; but in vain, for they will not be regarded. Thus a ſmall misfortune is ſcarce felt in preſence of a greater:

Lear. Thou think'ſt 'tis much, that this contentious ſtorm
Invades us to the ſkin; ſo 'tis to thee;
But where the greater malady is fix'd,
The leſſer is ſcarce felt. Thou'd'ſt ſhun a bear;
But if thy flight lay tow'rd the roaring ſea,
Thou'd'ſt meet the bear i' th' mouth. When the mind's free,
The body's delicate: the tempeſt in my mind
Doth from my ſenſes take all feeling elſe,
Save what beats there.

King Lear, act 3. ſc. 5.

35. *Genus, ſpecies, modification,* are terms invented to diſtinguiſh beings from each other. Individuals are diſtinguiſhed by their qualities: a large claſs of individuals enjoying qualities in common, is termed a *genus:* a ſubdiviſion of ſuch claſs is termed a *ſpecies.* Again, that circumſtance which diſtinguiſheth one genus, one ſpecies, or even one individual, from another, is termed

ed a *modification:* the ſame particular that is termed a *property* or *quality* when conſidered as belonging to an individual or a claſs of individuals, is termed a *modification* when conſidered as diſtinguiſhing the individual or the claſs from another. A black ſkin and ſoft curled hair, are properties of a negro: the ſame circumſtances conſidered as marks that diſtinguiſh a negro from a man of a different ſpecies, are denominated *modifications.*

36. Objects of ſight, being complex, are diſtinguiſhable into the ſeveral particulars that enter into the compoſition: theſe objects are all of them coloured; and they all have length, breadth, and thickneſs. When I behold a ſpreading oak, I diſtinguiſh in this object, ſize, figure, colour, and ſometimes motion: viewing a flowing river, I diſtinguiſh colour, figure, and conſtant motion: a dye has colour, black ſpots, ſix plain ſurfaces, all equal and uniform. The objects of touch, have all of them extenſion. Some of them are felt rough, ſome ſmooth: ſome of them are hard, ſome ſoft. With reſpect to the other ſenſes, ſome of their objects

jects are ſimple, ſome complex: a ſound, a taſte, a ſmell, may be ſo ſimple as not to be diſtinguiſhable into any parts: others are perceived to be compounded of different ſounds, different taſtes, and different ſmells.

37. The eye at one look can take in a number of objects, as of trees in a field, or men in a crowd: as theſe objects are diſtinct from each other, each having a ſeparate and independent exiſtence, they are diſtinguiſhable in the mind as well as in reality; and there is nothing more eaſy, than to abſtract from ſome and to confine our contemplation to others. A large oak with its ſpreading branches, fixes our attention upon itſelf, and abſtracts us from the ſhrubs that ſurround it. In the ſame manner, with reſpect to compounded ſounds, taſtes, or ſmells, we can fix our thoughts upon any one of the component parts, abſtracting our attention from the reſt. But the power of abſtraction is not confined to objects that are ſeparable in reality as well as mentally: it alſo takes place where there can be no real ſeparation. The ſize, the figure, the colour, of a tree, are inſeparably connected,

and cannot exiſt independent of each other: the ſame of length, breadth, and thickneſs: and yet we can mentally confine our obſervations to one of theſe, neglecting or abſtracting from the reſt. Here abſtraction takes place where there cannot be a real ſeparation.

38. This power of abſtraction is of great utility. A carpenter conſiders a log of wood, with regard to hardneſs, firmneſs, colour, and texture: a philoſopher, neglecting theſe properties, makes the log undergo a chymical analyſis; and examines its taſte, its ſmell, and its component principles: the geometrician confines his reaſoning to the figure, the length, breadth, and thickneſs. In general, every artiſt, abſtracting from all other properties, confines his obſervations to thoſe which have a more immediate connection with his profeſſion.

39. Hence clearly appears the meaning of an *abſtract term*, and *abſtract idea*. If in viewing an object, we can abſtract from ſome of its parts or properties, and attach ourſelves to others; there muſt be the ſame facility, when we recall this object to the mind

mind in idea. This leads directly to the definition of an abſtract idea, *viz.* "A par-"tial view of a complex object, limited to "one or more of the component parts or "properties, laying aſide or abſtracting "from others." A word that denotes an abſtract idea, is called an *abſtract term*.

40. The power of abſtraction is beſtowed upon man, for the purpoſes ſolely of reaſoning. It tends greatly to the facility as well as clearneſs of any proceſs of reaſoning, that, withdrawing from every other circumſtance, we can confine our attention to the ſingle property we deſire to inveſtigate.

41. Abſtract ideas, may, I think, be diſtinguiſhed into three different kinds, all equally ſubſervient to the reaſoning faculty. Individuals appear to have no end; and did we not poſſeſs the faculty of diſtributing them into claſſes, the mind would be loſt in an endleſs variety, and no progreſs be made in knowledge. It is by the faculty of abſtraction that we diſtribute beings into *genera* and *ſpecies*: finding a number of individuals connected by certain qualities common to all, we give a name to theſe

abſtract terms, even in thinking. It would be as difficult to reaſon without them, as to perform operations in algebra without ſigns: for there is ſcarce any reaſoning without ſome degree of abſtraction; and we cannot abſtract to purpoſe without making uſe of general terms. Hence it follows, that without language man would ſcarce be a rational being.

43. The ſame thing, in different reſpects, has different names. With reſpect to certain qualities, it is termed a *ſubſtance*; with reſpect to other qualities, a *body*; and with reſpect to qualities of all ſorts, a *ſubject*: it is termed a *paſſive ſubject* with reſpect to an action exerted upon it; an *object* with reſpect to a percipient; a *cauſe* with reſpect to the effect it produces; and an *effect* with reſpect to its cauſe.

INDEX.

[The volumes are denoted by numeral letters, the pages by figures.]

ABſtract idea) defined iii. 402. Abſtract ideas of different kinds iii. 403.

Abſtraction) power of iii. 401. Its uſe iii. 402. 403.

Abſtract terms) ought to be avoided in poetry i. 294. iii. 198. Cannot be compared but by being perſonified iii. 6. Perſonified iii. 65. Defined iii. 402. The uſe of abſtract terms iii. 405.

Accent) defined ii. 361. The muſical accents that are neceſſary in an hexameter line ii. 376. A low word muſt not be accented ii. 405. Rules for accenting Engliſh heroic verſe ii. 415. How far affected by the pauſe ii. 422. *&c.* Accent and pauſe have a mutual influence ii. 428.

Action) what feelings are raiſed by human actions i. 48. 49. 276. We are impelled to action by deſire i. 55. Some actions are ultimate, ſome are means leading to an end i. 57. Actions great and elevated, low and groveling i. 276. Emotions occaſioned by propriety of action ii. 13. Occaſioned by impropriety of action ii. 14. Human actions produce a great variety of emotions ii. 28. Human actions conſidered with reſpect to dignity and meanneſs ii. 35. We are conſcious of internal action

tion as in the head iii. 377. Internal action may exist without our being conscious of it iii. 377.

Actor) bombast action i. 308. An actor ought to feel the passion he represents ii. 153.

Admiration) defined i. 320.

Affectation) defined ii. 11.

Affection) to children accounted for i. 82. To blood-relations accounted for i. 83. To property accounted for i. 84. Affection to children endures longer than any other affection i. 150. Opinion and belief influenced by affection i. 199. Affection defined ii. 87. iii. 394.

Agamemnon) of Seneca censured ii. 193.

Agreeable emotions and passions i. 127. *&c.*

Alcestes) of Euripides censured iii. 286. 289.

Alexandre of Racine) censured ii. 177.

Allegory iii. 108. *&c.* More difficult in painting than in poetry iii. 129. In an historical poem iii. 248.

All for Love) of Dryden censured ii. 202.

Ambiguity) occasioned by a wrong arrangement ii. 297.

Amynta) of Tasso censured ii. 167.

Amor patriæ) accounted for i. 88.

Amphibrachys ii. 460.

Amphimacer ii. 460.

Analytic) and synthetic methods of reasoning compared i. 31.

Anapæstus ii. 460.

Anger) explained i. 95. *&c.* Sometimes exerted against the innocent i. 191. And even against things inanimate i. 191. Not infectious i. 221. Has no dignity in it ii. 33.

Animals) diſtributed by nature into claſſes iii. 356.
Antibacchius ii. 460.
Anticlimax ii. 345.
Antiſpaſtus ii. 461.
Antitheſis ii. 73. 262. Verbal antitheſis ii. 268.
Apoſtrophe iii. 87. *&c.*
Appearance) in poetry, things ought to be deſcribed as they appear, not as they are in reality iii. 172.
Appetite) defined i. 59. Appetites of hunger, thirſt, animal love, ariſe without an object i. 73. Appetite for fame or eſteem i. 237.
Architecture ch. 24. iii. 294. Grandeur of manner in architecture i. 294. The ſituation of a great houſe ought to be lofty ii. 7. A playhouſe or a muſic-room ſuſceptible of much ornament ii. 9. What emotions can be raiſed by architecture iii. 297. Its emotions compared with thoſe of gardening iii. 297. Every building ought to have an expreſſion ſuited to its deſtination iii. 298. 338. Simplicity ought to be the governing taſte iii. 300. Regularity ought to be ſtudied iii. 301. External form of dwelling-houſes iii. 324. Diviſions within iii. 324. 340. A palace ought to be regular, but in a ſmall houſe convenience ought chiefly to be ſtudied iii. 326. The form of a dwelling-houſe ought to be ſuited to the climate iii. 327. Propriety ought to be ſtudied in architecture iii. 338. Governed by principles which produce oppoſite effects iii. 342. Different ornaments employed by it iii. 342. Allegorical or emblematic ornaments iii. 347. Architecture inſpires a taſte for neatneſs and regularity iii. 350.

Architrave iii. 344.
Arioſto) cenſured iii. 264.
Ariſtæus) the epiſode of Ariſtæus in the Georgics cenſured ii. 457.
Army) defined iii. 405.
Arrangement) the beſt arrangement of words is to place them as much as poſſible in an increaſing ſeries ii. 251.
Articulate ſounds) how far agreeable to the ear ii. 240.
Artificial mount iii. 313.
Aſcent) pleaſant, but deſcent not painful i. 273.
Athalie) of Racine cenſured ii. 193.
Attention) defined iii. 396. Impreſſion which objects make depends on the degree of attention iii. 396. Attention not always voluntary iii. 398.
Attractive emotions ii. 133.
Attractive object i. 226.
Attributes) transferred from one ſubject to another iii. 100. *&c.*
Avarice) defined i. 52.
Avenue) to a houſe iii. 312.
Averſion) defined ii. 87. iii. 395.

Bacchius ii. 460.
Barren ſcene) defined iii. 266.
Baſe) of a column iii. 346.
Baſſo-relievo iii. 347.
Batrachomuomachia) cenſured ii. 42.
Beauty, ch. 3. i. 241. Intrinſic and relative i. 244. Beauty of ſimplicity i. 247. of figure i. 248. of the circle i. 251. of the ſquare i. 251. of a regular

lar polygon i. 252. of a parallelogram i. 252. of an equilateral triangle i. 253. Beauty, whether a primary or ſecondary quality of objects i. 260. Diſtinguiſhed from congruity ii. 8. Great beauty ſeldom produces a conſtant lover ii. 101. Beauty proper and figurative iii. 388.

Belief) fortified by a lively narrative or a good hiſtorical painting i. 122. influenced by paſſion i. 196. iii. 55. 89. influenced by propenſity i. 199. influenced by affection i. 199.

Benevolence) joins with ſelf-love to make us happy i. 228. inſpired by gardening iii. 320.

Blank verſe ii. 381. 435. Its aptitude for inverſion ii. 438. Its melody ii. 439. &c.

Body) defined iii. 406.

Boileau) cenſured iii. 242.

Bombaſt i. 303. Bombaſt in action i. 308.

Burleſk) machinery does well in a burleſk poem i. 125. Burleſk diſtinguiſhed into two kinds ii. 41.

Cadence ii. 348. 362.

Capital) of a column iii. 346.

Careleſs Huſband) its double plot well contrived iii. 253.

Caſcade i. 314.

Cauſe) reſembling cauſes may produce effects that have no reſemblance: and cauſes that have no reſemblance may produce reſembling effects ii. 337. &c. Cauſe defined iii. 406.

Chance) the mind revolts againſt misfortunes that happen by chance iii. 232.

Character) to draw a character is the maſter-piece of deſcription iii. 182.

Characteriſtics) of Shafteſbury criticiſed ii. 10. Note.
Children) love to them accounted for i. 82.
Chineſe gardens iii. 316. Wonder and ſurpriſe ſtudied in them iii. 319.
Choreus ii. 459.
Choriambus ii. 461.
Chorus) an eſſential part of the Grecian tragedy iii. 270.
Church) what ought to be its form and ſituation iii. 338.
Cicero) cenſured ii. 329. 350.
Cid) of Corneille cenſured ii. 166. 198.
Cinna) of Corneille cenſured ii. 11. 161. 194.
Circle) its beauty i. 251.
Circumſtances) in a period, how they ought to be arranged ii. 314. *&c.*
Claſs) all living creatures diſtributed into claſſes iii. 356.
Climax) in ſenſe i. 281. ii. 322. in ſound ii. 252.
Coephores) of Eſchylus cenſured ii. 114.
Coexiſtent) emotions and paſſions i. 151. *&c.*
Colonnade) where proper iii. 327.
Colour) a ſecondary quality i. 259.
Columns) every column ought to have a baſe i. 218. The baſe ought to be ſquare i. 218. 219. Columns admit different proportions iii. 332. What emotions they raiſe iii. 339. Column more beautiful than a pilaſter iii. 344. Its form iii. 346.
Comedy) double plot in a comedy iii. 253.
Commencement) the commencement of a work ought to be modeſt and ſimple iii. 171.
Common nature) in every ſpecies of animals iii. 356.

We have a conviction that this common nature is perfect or right iii. 357. Alſo that it is invariable iii. 357.
Common ſenſe iii. 359. 373.
Compariſon i. 346. *&c.* Ch. 19. iii. 3. Compariſons that reſolve into a play of words iii. 42.
Complex emotion i. 152. 154. 155.
Complex perception iii. 383.
Complexion) white ſuits with a pale complexion, black with a dark complexion, and ſcarlet with one that is over-flushed i. 369.
Conception) defined iii. 379.
Concord) or harmony in objects of ſight i. 156.
Concordant ſounds) defined i. 151.
Congreve) cenſured iii. 258.
Congruity and propriety, ch. 10. ii. 3. Congruity diſtinguiſhed from beauty ii. 8. diſtinguiſhed from propriety ii. 8. Congruity coincides with proportion with reſpect to quantity ii. 19.
Connection) neceſſary in all compoſitions i. 34.
Conqueſt of Granada) of Dryden cenſured ii. 201.
Conſonants ii. 239.
Conſtancy) great beauty the cauſe generally of inconſtancy ii. 101.
Conſtruction) of language explained ii. 285.
Contempt) raiſed by improper action i. 340.
Contraſt i. 345. *&c.* Its effect in gardening iii. 317.
Conviction) intuitive. *See* Intuitive conviction.
Copulative) to drop the copulatives enlivens the expreſſion ii. 281. *&c.*
Coriolanus) of Shakeſpear cenſured ii. 200.
Corneille) cenſured ii. 159. 216.

Corporeal pleaſure i. 1. 2. low and ſometimes mean ii. 32.
Couplet ii. 381.
Courage) of greater dignity than juſtice. Why? ii. 31.
Creticus ii. 460.
Criminal) the hour of execution ſeems to him to approach with a ſwift pace i. 202.
Criticiſm) its advantages i. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. its terms not accurately defined ii. 139.
Crowd) defined iii. 404.
Curioſity i. 320. 345. *&c.*
Cuſtom and habit, ch. 14. ii. 81. Cuſtom diſtinguiſhed from habit ii. 82.

Dactyle ii. 364. *&c.* 460.
Declenſions) explained ii. 288. 289.
Delicacy) of taſte i. 136.
Deriſion ii. 16.
Deſcent) not painful i. 273.
Deſcription) it animates a deſcription to repreſent things paſt as preſent i. 118. The rules which ought to govern it iii. 169. *&c.* A lively deſcription is agreeable, though the ſubject deſcribed be diſagreeable iii. 208. Deſcription cannot reach any object but thoſe of ſight iii. 385.
Deſcriptive perſonification iii. 64.
Deſcriptive tragedy ii. 155.
Deſire) defined i. 55. It impels us to action i. 55. It determines the will i. 222. Deſire in a criminal of ſelf-puniſhment i. 232. Deſire tends the moſt to happineſs when moderate i. 263.

Dialogue) dialogue-writing requires great genius ii. 151. 152. 153. In dialogue every expreſſion ought to be ſuited to the character of the ſpeaker iii. 196. Rules for its compoſition iii. 256.

Dignity and meanneſs, ch. 11. ii. 27. Dignity of human nature iii. 361.

Diiambus ii. 461.

Diſagreeable emotions and paſſions i. 127. *&c.*

Diſcordant ſounds) defined i. 152.

Diſpondeus ii. 461.

Diſpoſition) defined iii. 394.

Diſſimilar emotions i. 153. Their effects when co-exiſtent i. 159. iii. 303. 337.

Diſſimilar paſſions) their effects i. 171.

Diſſocial paſſions i. 62. Diſſocial paſſions all painful i. 131. and alſo diſagreeable i. 134.

Ditrochæus ii. 461.

Door) its proportion iii. 322.

Double action) in an epic poem iii. 264.

Double-dealer) of Congreve cenſured ii. 193. iii. 266.

Double plot) in a dramatic compoſition iii. 251.

Drama) ancient and modern drama compared iii. 280.

Dramatic poetry iii. 218. *&c.*

Drapery ought to hang looſe i. 219.

Dreſs) rules about dreſs ii. 10. iii. 300.

Dryden) cenſured iii. 128. 257. 267.

Duties) moral duties of two kinds, reſpecting ourſelves and reſpecting others ii. 20. Foundation of duties that reſpect ourſelves ii. 21. Of thoſe that reſpect others ii. 21.

Effects) reſembling effects may be produced by cauſes that

that have no reſemblance ii. 337. *&c.* Effect defined iii. 406.

Electra) of Sophocles cenſured ii. 115.

Elevation i. 264. *&c.* real and figurative intimately connected i. 279. Figurative elevation diſtinguiſhed from figurative grandeur iii. 21. 22.

Emotion) no pleaſure of external ſenſe except of ſeeing and hearing is termed an *emotion* or *paſſion* i. 42. Emotions defined i. 46. 47. and their cauſes aſſigned i. 47. *&c.* Emotion diſtinguiſhed from paſſion i. 52. *&c.* Emotions generated by relations i. 76. *&c.* Primary, ſecondary i. 81. Raiſed by fiction i. 104. *&c.* Diviſion of emotions into pleaſant and painful, agreeable and diſagreeable i. 127. *&c.* iii. 387. The interrupted exiſtence of emotions i. 139. *&c.* Their growth and decay i. 139. *&c.* Their identity i. 141. Co-exiſtent emotions i. 151. *&c.* Emotions ſimilar and diſſimilar i. 153. Complex emotion i. 154. 155. Effects of ſimilar emotions when co-exiſtent i. 155. iii. 336. Effects of diſſimilar emotions when co-exiſtent i. 159. iii. 303. 337. Emotions reſemble their cauſes i. 217. *&c.* Emotion of grandeur i. 266. *&c.* of ſublimity i. 269. A low emotion i. 276. Emotion of laughter i. 337. of ridicule i. 341. Emotions when contraſted ought not to be too ſlow or too quick in their ſucceſſion i. 373. Emotions raiſed by the fine arts ought to be contraſted in ſucceſſion i. 374. Emotion of congruity ii. 12. of propriety ii. 12. Emotions produced by human actions ii. 28. Emotions ranked according to their dignity ii. 32. External ſigns of emotions ch. 15. ii. 116.

Attractive and repulsive emotions ii. 133. Emotion and passions expanded upon related objects i. 76. &c. ii. 312. &c. 336. 372. 415. 416. iii. 60. &c. 139. 140. Gratification of emotions i. 183. &c. 203. 358. iii. 98. What emotions do best in succession, what in conjunction iii. 302. Man is passive with regard to his emotions iii. 377. We are conscious of emotions as in the heart iii. 377.

Emphasis) must not be put upon a low word ii. 405.

Eneid) its unity of action iii. 263.

English plays) generally irregular iii. 292.

English tongue) too rough ii. 247. It is peculiarly qualified for personification iii. 63. Note.

Envy) defined i. 55. It magnifies every bad quality in its object i. 187.

Epic poem) no improbable fact ought to be admitted in it i. 124. Machinery in it has a bad effect i. 125. It doth not always reject ludicrous images i. 378. We pardon many faults in it which are intolerable in a sonnet or epigram i. 299. Its commencement ought to be modest and simple iii. 171. In what respect it differs from a tragedy iii. 218. Distinguished into pathetic and moral iii. 221. Its good effects iii. 223. Compared with tragedy as to the subjects proper for each iii. 225. How far it may borrow from history iii. 234. Rule for dividing it into parts iii. 236.

Epic poetry ch. 22. iii. 218.

Episode) in an historical poem iii. 250.

Epistles dedicatory) censured ii. 6. Note.

Epithets) redundant iii. 206.

Epitritus ii. 462.

in theſe arts iii. 366. Who are qualified to be judges in the fine arts iii. 371.

Fluid) motion of fluids i. 311.

Foot) a liſt of verſe feet ii. 459.

Force) produces a feeling that reſembles it i. 218. Force i. 309. *&c.* Moving force i. 312. The pleaſure of force differs from that of motion i. 313. It contributes to grandeur i. 315.

Foreign) preference given to foreign curioſities i. 331.

Fountains) in what form they ought to be iii. 313.

Friendſhip) conſidered with reſpect to dignity and meanneſs ii. 33.

Games) public games of the Greeks i. 314.

Gardening) grandeur of manner in gardening i. 294. Its emotions ought to be contraſted in ſucceſſion i. 375. A ſmall garden ought to be confined to a ſingle expreſſion i. 376. A garden near a great city ought to have an air of ſolitude i. 376. A garden in a wild country ought to be gay and ſplendid i. 377. Gardening ch. 24. iii. 294. What emotions can be raiſed by it iii. 296. Its emotions compared with thoſe of architecture iii. 297. Simplicity ought to be the governing taſte iii. 300. Wherein the unity of a garden conſiſts iii. 304. How far ought regularity to be ſtudied in it iii. 305. Reſemblance carried too far in it iii. 305. Note. Grandeur in gardening iii. 306. Every unnatural object ought to be rejected iii. 308. Diſtant and faint imitations diſpleaſe iii. 309. The effect of giving play to the imagination iii. 318. Gardening inſpires

inſpires benevolence iii. 320. and contributes to rectitude of manners iii. 350.

General idea) there cannot be ſuch a thing iii. 383. Note.

General terms) ought to be avoided in compoſitions for amuſement iii. 198.

General theorems) why they are agreeable i. 255.

Generic habit) defined ii. 95.

Generoſity) why of greater dignity than juſtice ii. 31.

Genus) defined iii. 399.

Geſtures) that accompany the different paſſions ii. 120. 121. 125.

Gieruſalleme liberata) cenſured iii. 242. 249.

Good nature) why of leſs dignity than courage or generoſity ii. 31.

Gothic tower) its beauty iii. 324.

Government) natural foundation of ſubmiſſion to government i. 236.

Grandeur) demands not ſtrict regularity i. 257. 298. Grandeur and ſublimity Ch. 4. i. 264. Real and figurative grandeur intimately connected i. 279. Grandeur of manner i. 288. Grandeur may be employed indirectly to humble the mind i. 300. Suits ill with wit and ridicule i. 377. Figurative grandeur diſtinguiſhed from figurative elevation iii. 21. 22. Grandeur in gardening iii. 306. Regularity and proportion hide the grandeur of a building iii. 342.

Gratification) of paſſion i. 58. 59. 65. 66. 183. *&c.* 203. 358. iii. 98.

Gratitude) exerted upon the children of the benefactor i. 187. Puniſhment of ingratitude ii. 25. Gratitude conſidered

conſidered with reſpect to dignity and meanneſs ii. 33.
Grief) magnifies its cauſe i. 190. occaſions a falſe reckoning of time i. 211. is infectious i. 220. when immoderate is ſilent ii. 204.
Groſs pleaſure i. 137.
Guido) cenſured iii. 131.

Habit) ch. 14. ii. 81. diſtinguiſhed from cuſtom ii. 82.
Harmony) or concord in objects of ſight i. 156. Diſtinguiſhed from melody ii. 358. Note.
Hatred) ſignifies more commonly affection than paſſion i. 146.
Hearing) in hearing we feel no impreſſion iii. 380.
Henriade) cenſured iii. 178. 236. 243. 249.
Hexameter) Virgils hexameters extremely melodious; thoſe of Horace not always ſo ii. 357. Structure of an hexameter line ii. 364. Rules for its ſtructure ii. 367. Muſical pauſes in an hexameter line ii. 368. Wherein its melody conſiſts ii. 380.
Hippolytus) of Euripides cenſured ii. 197. iii. 286. 288.
Hiſtory) hiſtories of conquerors and heroes ſingularly agreeable. Why? i. 72. 285. By what means does hiſtory raiſe our paſſions i. 115. 118. It rejects poetical images iii. 170.
Homer) defective in order and connection i. 35. His language finely ſuited to his ſubject iii. 194. His repetitions defended iii. 204. His poems in a great meaſure dramatic iii. 220. cenſured iii. 246.
Horace) defective in connection i. 35. His hexameters

ters not always melodious ii. 358. Their defects pointed out ii. 380.
Horror) objects of horror ought to be baniſhed from poetry and painting iii. 213.
Humour) defined ii. 44. Humour in writing diſtinguiſhed from humour in character ii. 44.
Hyperbole iii. 89.
Hyppobacchius ii. 460.

Iambic verſe) its modulation faint ii. 358.
Iambus ii. 459.
Jane Shore) cenſured ii. 168.
Idea) ſucceſſion of ideas i. 381. Idea of memory defined iii. 382. cannot be innate iii. 382. Note. No general ideas iii. 383. Note. Idea of an object of ſight more diſtinct than of any other object iii. 384. Ideas diſtinguiſhed into three kinds iii. 386. Idea of imagination not ſo pleaſant as an idea of memory iii. 393.
Ideal preſence i. 107. *&c.*
Identity) of paſſions and emotions i. 141.
Jet d'eau i. 313. 314. iii. 308. 310.
Jingle of words ii. 231.
Iliad) criticiſed iii. 263.
Imagination) not always at reſt even in ſleep i. 337. Effect in gardening of giving play to it iii. 318. Its power of fabricating images iii. 385.
Imitation) we naturally imitate virtuous actions i. 220. not thoſe that are vicious i. 221. None of the fine arts imitate nature except painting and ſculpture ii. 234. The agreeableneſs of imitation overbalances the

the diſagreeableneſs of the ſubject iii. 208. Diſtant and faint imitations diſpleaſe iii. 309.

Impreſſion) made on the organ of ſenſe iii. 380.

Impropriety) in action raiſes contempt i. 340. Its puniſhment ii. 15.

Impulſe) a ſtrong impulſe ſucceeding a weak, makes a double impreſſion: a weak impulſe ſucceeding a ſtrong, makes ſcarce any impreſſion ii. 251.

Infinite ſeries) becomes diſagreeable when prolonged i. 365. Note.

Innate idea) there cannot be ſuch a thing iii. 382. Note.

Inſtrument) the means or inſtrument conceived to be the agent iii. 98. *&c.*

Intellectual pleaſure i. 2. 3.

Internal ſenſe iii. 375.

Intrinſic beauty i. 244.

Intuitive conviction) of the veracity of our ſenſes i. 105. of the dignity of human nature ii. 29. iii. 361. of a common nature or ſtandard in every ſpecies of beings iii. 356. and of the perfection of that ſtandard iii. 357. alſo that it is invariable iii. 357. Intuitive conviction that the external ſigns of paſſion are natural, and the ſame in all men ii. 135.

Inverſion) an inverted ſtyle deſcribed ii. 290. *&c.* Inverſion gives force and livelineſs to the expreſſion by ſuſpending the thought till the cloſe ii. 324. Inverſion how regulated ii. 330. 331. 332. Beauties of inverſion ii. 331. 332. Full ſcope for it in blank verſe ii. 438.

Ionicus ii. 461.

Joy) its cauſe i. 65. infectious i. 220. conſidered with reſpect to dignity and meanneſs ii. 33.
Iphigenia) of Racine cenſured ii. 112.
Iphigenia in Tauris) cenſured iii. 287. 288. 289.
Irony) defined ii. 50.
Italian tongue) too ſmooth ii. 246. Note.
Judgement) and memory in perfection, ſeldom united i. 28. Judgement ſeldom united with wit i. 28.
Julius Cæſar) of Shakeſpear cenſured ii. 200.
Juſtice) of leſs dignity than generoſity or courage ii. 31.

Kent) his ſkill in gardening iii. 303.
Key-note ii. 348. 361.
Kitchen-garden iii. 315.

Labyrinth) in a garden iii. 310.
Landſcape) why it is ſo agreeable i. 156. The pleaſure it gives explained i. 298. A landſcape in painting ought to be confined to a ſingle expreſſion i. 376.
Language) power of language to raiſe emotions, whence derived i. 112. 121. Language of paſſion ch. 17. ii. 204. broken and interrupted ii. 206. of impetuous paſſion ii. 210. of languid paſſion ii. 210. of calm emotions ii. 211. of turbulent paſſion ii. 211. Language elevated above the tone of the ſentiment ii. 224. too artificial or too figurative ii. 225. too light or airy ii. 227. Language how far imitative of nature ii. 234. its beauty with reſpect to ſignification ii. 235. 254. &c. its beauty with reſpect to ſound ii. 238. it ought to correſpond

to the ſubject ii. 258. its ſtructure explained ii. 285. Beauty of language from a reſemblance betwixt ſound and ſignification ii. 333. *&c.* The force of language proceeds from raiſing complete images iii. 174. its power of producing pleaſant emotions iii. 208. Without language man would ſcarce be a rational being iii. 406.

L'avare) of Moliere cenſured ii. 198.

Laughter i. 338.

Laugh of deriſion or ſcorn ii. 16.

Law) defined ii. 22.

Laws of human nature) neceſſary ſucceſſion of perceptions i. 21. 380. We never act but through the impulſe of deſire i. 55. 222. An object loſes its reliſh by familiarity i. 144. Paſſions ſudden in their growth are equally ſudden in their decay i. 148. ii. 91. Every paſſion ceaſes upon attaining its ultimate end i. 148.

Laws of motion) agreeable i. 255.

Les Freres ennemies) of Racine cenſured ii. 177.

Lex talionis) upon what principle founded i. 370.

Line) definition of a regular line iii. 389.

Littleneſs) is neither pleaſant nor painful i. 272.

Logic) cauſe of its obſcurity and intricacy ii. 138.

Logio) improper in this climate iii. 327.

Love) to children accounted for i. 82. The love a man bears to his country explained i. 88. Love produced by pity i. 93. It ſignifies more commonly affection than paſſion i. 146. To a lover abſence appears long i. 202. Love aſſumes the qualities of its object i. 219. conſidered with reſpect to dignity and meanneſs ii. 33. ſeldom conſtant when found-

ed

ed on exquiſite beauty ii. 101. ill repreſented in French plays ii. 194. when immoderate is ſilent ii. 205.
Love for love) cenſured iii. 266.
Lowneſs) is neither pleaſant nor painful i. 272.
Lucan) too minute in his deſcriptions i. 292. cenſured iii. 220.
Ludicrous i. 338. may be introduced into an epic poem i. 378.
Lutrin) cenſured for incongruity ii. 9. characterized ii. 41.
Luxury) corrupts our taſte iii. 370.

Machinery) ought to be excluded from an epic poem i. 125. iii. 239. does well in a burleſk poem i. 125.
Man) fitted for ſociety i. 237. Conformity of the nature of man to his external circumſtances i. 310. ii. 143. The different branches of his internal conſtitution finely ſuited to each other iii. 332. 364.
Manners) groſs and refined i. 118. The bad tendency of rough and blunt manners ii. 141. Note.
Marvellous) in epic poetry iii. 246.
Meanneſs ii. 27. *&c.*
Means) the means or inſtrument conceived to be the agent iii. 98. *&c.*
Meaſure) natural meaſure of time i. 200. *&c.* of ſpace, i. 211. *&c.*
Medea) of Euripides cenſured iii. 287.
Melody) or modulation defined ii. 355. diſtinguiſhed from harmony ii. 358. Note.
Members of a period) have a fine effect placed in an increaſing ſeries ii. 252.

Memory) and judgement in perfection ſeldom united i. 28. Memory and wit often united i. 28. Memory iii. 381.

Merry wives of Windſor) its double plot well contrived iii. 253.

Metaphor iii. 108. *&c.*

Metre ii. 381.

Mile) the computed miles are longer in a barren than in a populous country i. 209.

Milton) his ſtyle much inverted ii. 439. The defect of his verſification is the want of coincidence betwixt the pauſes of the ſenſe and the ſound ii. 445. the beauty of Milton's compariſons iii. 16.

Moderation) in our deſires contributes the moſt to happineſs i. 263.

Modern manners) make a poor figure in an epic poem iii. 235.

Modification) defined iii. 399.

Modulation) defined ii. 355.

Moloſſus ii. 459.

Monoſyllables) Engliſh, arbitrary as to quantity ii. 383.

Moral duties) *See* Duties.

Morality) its foundation iii. 358. Aberrations from its true ſtandard iii. 366.

Moral tragedy iii. 221.

Motion) productive of feelings that reſemble it i. 217. Its laws agreeable i. 255. Motion and force, ch. 5. i. 309. *&c.* What motions are the moſt agreeable i. 310. Regular motion i. 311. accelerated motion i. 311. upward motion i. 311. undulating motion i. 311. Motion of fluids i. 311. A body moved neither

neither agreeable nor diſagreeable i. 312. The pleaſure of motion differs from that of force i. 313. Grace of motion i. 317. Motions of the human body i. 317.
Motive) defined i. 58. 59.
Mount) artificial iii. 313.
Mourning Bride) cenſured ii. 180. 197. iii. 279. 292.
Muſic) vocal diſtinguiſhed from inſtrumental i. 166. What ſubjects proper for vocal muſic i. 166. *&c.* Muſic betwixt the acts of a play, the advantages that may be drawn from it iii. 283. Though it cannot raiſe a paſſion, it diſpoſes the heart to various paſſions iii. 284.
Muſical inſtruments) their different effects upon the mind i. 283.
Muſical meaſure) defined ii. 355.

Narration) it animates a narrative to repreſent things paſt as preſent i. 118. Narration and deſcription, ch. 21. iii. 169. It animates a narrative, to make it dramatic iii. 197. 220.
Nation) defined iii. 404.
Note, a high note and a low note in muſic i. 278.
Novelty and the unexpected appearance of objects, ch. 6. i. 319. Novelty a pleaſant emotion i. 322. *&c.* diſtinguiſhed from variety i. 329. its different degrees i. 329. *&c.*
Number) defined iii. 331.
Numerus) defined ii. 355.

Object) of a paſſion defined i. 56. An agreeable object produceth a pleaſant emotion, and a diſagreeable

able object a painful emotion i. 223. attractive object i. 226. repulsive object i. 226. Objects of sight the most complex i. 243. Objects that are neither pleasant nor painful i. 272. 309. 312. Objects of external sense in what place they are perceived iii. 376. Objects of internal sense iii. 377. All objects of sight are complex iii. 400. Objects simple and complex iii. 401. Object defined iii. 406.

Old Bachelor) censured iii. 266.

Opera) censured ii. 9.

Opinion) influenced by passion i. 183. *&c.* iii. 55. influenced by propensity i. 199. influenced by affection i. 199. why differing from me in opinion is disagreeable iii. 459. Opinion defined iii. 396.

Oration) *pro Archia poeta* censured ii. 329.

Orchard iii. 418.

Order) i. 28. *&c* iii. 392. pleasure we have in order i. 32. necessary in all compositions i. 34. Sense of order has an influence upon our passions i. 81. 89. when a list of many particulars is brought into a period, in what order should they be placed? ii. 321. Order in stating facts iii. 264.

Organ of sense i. 1.

Organic pleasure i 1. 2. 3. 4.

Orlando Furioso) censured iii. 264.

Ornament) redundant ornaments ought to be avoided iii. 68. Ornaments in architecture iii. 342. Allegorical or emblematic ornaments iii. 347.

Othello) censured iii. 215.

INDEX.

Pæon ii. 461.

Pain) ceſſation of pain extremely pleaſant i. 68. Pain leſſens by cuſtom ii 102. iii. 355. Some pains felt internally ſome externally iii 387.

Painful emotions and paſſions i 127. *&c.*

Painting) in groteſque painting the figures ought to be ſmall, in hiſtorical painting as great as the life i. 279. Grandeur of manner in painting i. 293. Painting is an imitation of nature ii. 234. In hiſtory-painting the principal figure ought to be in the beſt light iii. 201. A good picture agreeable, though the ſubject be diſagreeable iii. 208. Objects that ſtrike terror have a fine effect in painting iii. 211. Objects of horror ought not to be repreſented iii. 213. What emotions can be raiſed by painting iii. 296.

Panic i. 221.

Parallelogram) its beauty i. 252.

Parody) defined ii. 52. 160. Note.

Particles ii. 404. not capable of an accent ii. 405. 416.

Paſſion) no pleaſure of external ſenſe denominated a paſſion except of ſeeing and hearing i. 42. Paſſion diſtinguiſhed from emotion i. 52. 53. 54. Paſſions diſtinguiſhed into inſtinctive and deliberative i. 58. 95. *&c.* What are ſelfiſh, what ſocial i. 59. What diſſocial i. 62. Paſſion founded on relations i. 76. *&c.* A paſſion paves the way to others in the ſame tone i. 92. Paſſions conſidered as pleaſant or painful, agreeable or diſagreeable i. 127. *&c.* as refined or groſs i. 137. Their interrupted exiſtence i. 139. *&c.* Their growth and decay i. 139. *&c.*

&c. The identity of a paſſion i. 141. The bulk of our paſſions are the affections of love or hatred inflamed into a paſſion i. 146. Paſſions ſwell by oppoſition i. 146. A paſſion ſudden in growth is ſudden in decay i. 148. ceaſes upon attaining its ultimate end i. 148. Co-exiſtent paſſions i. 151. *&c.* Paſſions ſimilar and diſſimilar i. 171. Fluctuation of paſſion i. 178. *&c.* Its influence upon our opinions and belief i. 183. *&c.* 203. 358. Its influence upon our perceptions i. 215. 216. Prone to its gratification i. 238. 239. has an influence even upon our eye-ſight i. 362. 363. Paſſions ranked according to their dignity ii. 32. No diſagreeable paſſion is attended with dignity ii. 33. Social paſſions of greater dignity than ſelfiſh ii. 37. External ſigns of paſſion ch. 15. ii. 116. Paſſion generally fluctuates, ſwelling and ſubſiding by turns ii. 163. Language of paſſion ch. 17. ii. 204. *&c.* A paſſion when immoderate is ſilent ii. 204. Language of paſſion broken and interrupted ii. 206. What paſſions admit figurative expreſſion ii. 208. Language proper for impetuous paſſion ii. 210. for melancholy ii. 210. for calm emotions ii. 211. for turbulent paſſion ii. 211. Paſſions expanded upon related objects i. 76. *&c.* ii. 312. *&c.* 336. 372. 415. 416. iii. 60. *&c.* 139. 140. With regard to paſſion man is paſſive iii. 377. We are conſcious of paſſions as in the heart iii. 377.

Paſſionate) perſonification iii. 64.

Paſſive ſubject) defined iii. 406.

Pathetic tragedy iii. 221.

Pauſe) pauſes neceſſary for three different purpoſes

ſes ii. 360. Muſical pauſes in an hexameter line ii. 368. Muſical pauſes ought to coincide with thoſe in the ſenſe ii. 371. 375. What muſical pauſes are eſſential in Engliſh heroic verſe ii. 388. Rules concerning them ii. 390. &c. Pauſe and accent have a mutual influence ii. 428.

Pedeſtal) ought to be ſparingly ornamented iii. 347.

Perceptions) ſucceſſion of i. 380. Perception defined iii. 378. Original and ſecondary iii. 382. Simple and complex iii. 383.

Period) has a fine effect when its members proceed in the form of an increaſing ſeries ii. 252. In the periods of a diſcourſe variety ought to be ſtudied ii. 253. Different thoughts ought not to be crowded into one period ii. 263. The ſcene ought not to be changed in a period ii. 278. A period ſo arranged as to expreſs the ſenſe clearly, ſeems more muſical than where the ſenſe is left doubtful ii. 307. In what part of the period doth a word make the greateſt figure ii. 318. A period ought to be cloſed with that word which makes the greateſt figure ii. 320. When there is occaſion to mention many particulars, in what order ought they to be placed ii. 321. A ſhort period is lively and familiar, a long period grave and ſolemn ii. 328. A diſcourſe ought not to commence with a long period ii. 329.

Perſonification iii. 54. &c. Paſſionate and deſcriptive iii. 64.

Perſpicuity) a capital requiſite in writing ii. 256.

Pharſalia) cenſured iii. 220.

Phedra) of Racine cenſured ii. 113. 216.

Pilaſter) leſs beautiful than a column iii. 345.
Pindar) defective in order and connection i. 35.
Pity) defined i. 55 apt to produce love i. 93. always painful, yet always agreeable i. 134. reſembles its cauſe i. 221. What are the proper ſubjects for raiſing pity iii. 226.
Planetary ſyſtem) its beauty i. 316.
Play) is a chain of connected facts, each ſcene making a link iii. 266.
Play of words) ii 71. 228 *&c.* Compariſons that reſolve into a play of words iii. 42.
Pleaſant emotions and paſſions i. 127. *&c.* Pleaſant pain explained i. 155.
Pleaſure) pleaſures of ſeeing and hearing diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of the other ſenſes i. 1. 2. *&c* Pleaſure of order i. 32. of connection i. 32. Pleaſures of taſte, touch, and ſmell, not termed *emotions* or *paſſions* i. 42. Pleaſures refined and groſs i. 137. Corporeal pleaſure low and ſometimes mean ii 32. Pleaſures of the eye and ear never low or mean ii. 32. Pleaſures of the underſtanding are high in point of dignity ii. 34. Some pleaſures felt internally, ſome externally iii. 387.
Poet) the chief talent of a poet who deals in the pathetic ii. 189.
Poetry) objects that ſtrike terror have a fine effect in it iii. 211. Objects of horror ought to be baniſhed from it iii. 213. Poetry has power over all the human affections iii. 296. The moſt ſucceſsful in deſcribing objects of ſight iii. 385.
Polite behaviour i. 138.
Polygon) regular its beauty i. 252.

Polyſyllables) how far agreeable to the ear ii. 242. ſeldom have place in the conſtruction of Engliſh verſe ii. 385. 421.

Pompey) of Corneille cenſured ii. 176. 191. 194.

Pope excels in the variety of his melody ii. 411. His ſtyle compared with that of Swift iii. 198.

Poſture) conſtrained poſture diſagreeable to the ſpectator i. 219.

Power of abſtraction iii. 401. Its uſe iii. 402. 403.

Prepoſitions) explained ii. 289.

Pride) incites us to ridicule the blunders and abſurdities of others ii. 17. Conſidered with reſpect to dignity and meanneſs ii. 34. Its external expreſſions or ſigns diſagreeable ii. 132.

Primary and ſecondary qualities of matter i. 259.

Principle) of order i. 28. 29. of morality i. 49. 74. ii. 21. of ſelf-preſervation i. 96. of ſelfiſhneſs i. 227. 229. of benevolence i. 228. 229. Principle that makes us fond of eſteem i. 237. 286. of curioſity i. 320. 345. *&c.* of habit ii. 105. Principle that makes us wiſh others to be of our opinion iii. 57. 359. Principle defined iii. 394. *See* Propenſity.

Principles of the fine arts i. 7.

Proceleuſmaticus ii. 461.

Prodigies) find ready credit with the vulgar i. 198.

Prologue of the ancient tragedy iii. 271.

Pronoun) defined ii. 310.

Pronunciation) rules for it ii. 347. *&c.* diſtinguiſhed from ſinging ii. 348. Singing and pronouncing compared ii. 351.

Propenſity) opinion and belief influenced by it i. 199. Propenſity to fit objects for the gratification of our

paſſions i. 184. iii. 98. Propenſity to juſtify our paſſions and actions i. 185. Propenſity to puniſh guilt and reward virtue i. 231. Propenſity to carry along the good or bad properties of one ſubject to another i. 76. ii. 235. 307. 312. 372. 415. 416. iii. 101. Propenſity to complete every work that is begun and to carry things to perfection i. 364. 365. iii. 262. 345. Propenſity to communicate to others every thing that affects us ii. 204. Propenſity to place together things mutually connected ii. 308. Propenſity defined iii. 394. *See* Principle.

Properties) transferred from one ſubject to another iii. 100. *&c.*

Property) the affection man bears to his property i. 84.

Prophecy) thoſe who believe in prophecies wiſh the accompliſhment i. 239.

Propriety ii. 3. *&c.* diſtinguiſhed from congruity ii. 8. diſtinguiſhed from proportion ii. 19. Propriety in buildings iii. 338.

Proportion) diſtinguiſhed from propriety ii. 19. As to quantity coincides with congruity ii. 19. examined as applied to architecture iii. 328. Proportion defined iii. 391.

Proſe) diſtinguiſhed from verſe ii. 353.

Proſpect) pleaſure of a fine proſpect i. 298. An unbounded proſpect diſagreeable i. 366. Note.

Provok'd huſband) cenſured iii. 253.

Pun) defined ii. 77.

Puniſhment) in the place where the crime was committed i. 371. Puniſhment of impropriety ii. 15.

Public

Public games) of the Greeks i. 314.
Pyrrhichius ii. 459.

Qualities) primary and ſecondary i. 259. A quality cannot be conceived independent of the ſubject to which it belongs ii. 293. Different qualities perceived by different ſenſes iii. 376.
Quantity) with reſpect to melody ii. 363. 383. Quantity with reſpect to Engliſh verſe ii. 383.
Quintilian) cenſured iii. 92.
Quintus Curtius) cenſured ii. 167.

Racine) criticiſed ii. 216. *&c.*
Rape of the Lock) characteriz'd ii. 43. admirable verſification ii. 362.
Reading) chief talent of a fine reader ii. 120. Plaintive paſſions require a ſlow pronunciation ii. 161. Note. Rules for reading ii. 347. *&c.* compared with ſinging ii. 351.
Reaſon) reaſons to juſtify a favourite opinion are always at hand and much reliſhed i. 186.
Refined pleaſure i. 137.
Regularity) not eſſential in grand objects i. 257. required in a ſmall work, not ſo much in one that is extenſive i. 299. how far to be ſtudied in architecture iii. 301. 322. 328. how far to be ſtudied in a garden iii. 305. Regular line defined iii. 389. Regular figure defined iii. 389. Regularity proper and figurative iii. 390.
Relations i. 22. 23. have an influence in generating emotions and paſſions i. 76. *&c.* are the foundation of congruity and propriety ii. 5. in what manner are relations expreſſed in words ii. 286.

Relative beauty i. 244.
Remorſe) its gratification i. 232. is not mean. ii. 34.
Repartee ii. 80.
Repreſentation) its perfection lies in hiding itſelf and producing an impreſſion of reality iii. 279.
Repulſive) object i. 226. Repulſive emotions ii. 133.
Reſemblance) and contraſt, ch. 8. i. 345. The members of a ſentence ſignifying a reſemblance betwixt objects ought to reſemble each other ii. 270. *&c.* Reſembling cauſes may produce effects that have no reſemblance, and cauſes that have no reſemblance may produce reſembling effects ii. 337. *&c.* Reſemblance carried too far in ſome gardens iii. 305. Note.
Reſentment) explained i. 98. *&c.* diſagreeable in exceſs i. 134. extended againſt relations of the offender i. 190. its gratification i. 231. when immoderate is ſilent ii. 205.
Reſt) neither agreeable nor diſagreeable i. 309.
Revenge) animates but doth not elevate the mind i. 283. has no dignity in it ii. 33.
Reverie) cauſe of the pleaſure we have in it i. 112.
Rhyme) for what ſubjects it is proper ii. 447. *&c.* Melody of rhyme ii. 449.
Rhythmus) defined ii. 355.
Riches) love of, corrupts the taſte iii. 370.
Riddle iii. 310.
Ridicule) a groſs pleaſure i. 138. is loſing ground in England i. 138. Emotion of ridicule i. 341. not concordant with grandeur i. 377. Ridicule ii. 16. 40. *&c.* whether it be a teſt of truth ii. 55.
Ridiculous) diſtinguiſhed from riſible i. 341.

Riſible objects, ch 7. i. 337. Riſible diſtinguiſhed from ridiculous i. 341.
Rubens) cenſured iii. 130.
Ruin) ought not to be ſeen from a flower-parterre iii. 303. in what form it ought to be iii. 313.
Salluſt) cenſured for want of connection i. 37.
Sapphic verſe) has a very agreeable modulation ii. 358.
Scorn ii. 16.
Sculpture) imitates nature ii. 234. what emotions can be raiſed by it iii. 296.
Secchia rapita) characterized ii. 41.
Secondary qualities of matter i. 259.
Seeing) in ſeeing we feel no impreſſion iii. 380. Objects of ſight are all of them complex iii. 400.
Self-deceit i. 185. ii. 190.
Selfiſh paſſions i. 59. are pleaſant i. 131. leſs refined than the ſocial i. 137. inferior in dignity to the ſocial ii. 37.
Selfiſhneſs) promoted by luxury iii. 370. and alſo by love of riches iii. 370.
Self-love) its prevalence accounted for i. 63. in exceſs diſagreeable i. 134. not inconſiſtent with benevolence i. 228.
Semipauſe) in an hexameter line ii. 369. what ſemipauſes are found in an Engliſh heroic line ii. 390.
Senſation) defined iii. 378.
Senſe) of order i. 28. *&c.* contributes to generate emotions i. 81. and paſſions i. 89. Senſe of right and wrong i. 49. of the veracity of our ſenſes i. 105. Senſe of congruity or propriety ii. 6. of the dignity of human nature ii. 29. iii. 361. Senſe by which

which we diſcover a paſſion from its external ſigns ii. 136. Senſe of a common nature in every ſpecies of beings iii. 356. Senſe internal and external iii. 375. In touching, taſting, and ſmelling, we feel the impreſſion at the organ of ſenſe, not in ſeeing and hearing iii. 380.

Sentence) it detracts from neatneſs to vary the ſcene in the ſame ſentence ii. 278. A ſentence ſo arranged as to expreſs the ſenſe clearly, ſeems always more muſical than where the ſenſe is left in any degree doubtful ii. 307.

Sentiment) elevated, low i. 276. Sentiments ch. 16. ii. 149. Sentiments expreſſing the ſwelling of paſſion ii. 164. expreſſing the different ſtages of a paſſion ii. 165. dictated by co-exiſtent paſſions ii. 169. Sentiments of ſtrong paſſions are hid or diſſembled ii. 171. Sentiments above the tone of the paſſion ii. 175. below the tone of the paſſion ii. 176. Sentiments too gay for a ſerious paſſion ii. 178. too artificial for a ſerious paſſion ii. 179. fanciful or finical ii. 182. diſcordant with character ii. 186. miſplaced ii. 189. Immoral ſentiments expreſſed without diſguiſe ii. 189. unnatural ii. 196. Sentiment defined iii. 396.

Series) from ſmall to great agreeable i. 272. Aſcending ſeries i. 274. Deſcending ſeries i. 275. The effect of a number of objects placed in an increaſing or decreaſing ſeries ii. 249.

Serpentine river) its beauty i. 311. iii. 316.

Sertorius) of Corneille cenſured ii. 163.

Shaft) of a column iii. 346.

Shakeſpear) criticiſed ii. 212. deals little in inverſion ii.

ii. 439. excells in drawing characters iii. 182. his ſtyle in what reſpect excellent iii. 198. his dialogue excellent iii. 257. deals not in barren ſcenes iii. 267.

Shame) is not mean ii. 34.

Similar emotions i. 153. their effects when co-exiſtent i. 155. iii. 336. Similar paſſions i. 171. Effects of co-exiſtent ſimilar paſſions i. 171.

Simple perception iii. 383.

Simplicity) beauty of i. 247. 254. abandoned in the fine arts i. 255. a great beauty in tragedy iii. 252. Note. ought to be the governing taſte in gardening and architecture iii. 300.

Singing) diſtinguiſhed from pronouncing or reading ii. 348. Singing and pronouncing compared ii. 351.

Situation) different ſituations ſuited to different buildings iii. 339.

Smelling) in ſmelling we feel an impreſſion upon the organ of ſenſe iii. 380.

Smoke) the pleaſure of aſcending ſmoke accounted for i. 33. 313.

Social paſſions i. 59. more refined than the ſelfiſh i. 137. of greater dignity ii. 37.

Society) advantages of i. 237. 238. 240.

Soliloquy) has a foundation in nature ii. 123. Soliloquies ii. 218. *&c.*

Sorrow) cauſe of it i. 65.

Sounds) concordant i. 151. diſcordant i. 152. produce emotions that reſemble them i. 218. articulate how far agreeable to the ear ii. 240. A ſmooth ſound ſooths the mind, and a rough ſound animates ii. 245.

Space) natural computation of ſpace i. 211. *&c.*
Species) defined iii. 399.
Specific habit) defined ii. 95.
Speech) power of ſpeech to raiſe emotions, whence derived i. 112. 121.
Spondee ii. 364. *&c.* ii. 459.
Square) its beauty i. 251.
Stairs) their proportion iii. 323.
Standard) of taſte ch. 25. iii. 351. Standard of morals iii. 367.
Star) in gardening iii. 307.
Statue) the reaſon why a ſtatue is not coloured i. 372. An equeſtrian ſtatue is placed in a centre of ſtreets that it may be ſeen from many places at once iii. 201. Statue of an animal pouring out water iii. 308. of a water-god pouring water out of his urn iii. 350.
Strada) cenſured iii. 170.
Style) natural and inverted ii. 290. *&c.* The beauties of a natural ſtyle ii. 332. of an inverted ſtyle ii. 332. Conciſe ſtyle a great ornament iii. 204.
Subject) may be conceived independent of any particular quality ii. 293. Subject with reſpect to its qualities iii. 376. Subject defined iii. 406.
Sublimity i. 264. *&c.* Sublime in poetry i. 277. Sublimity may be employed indirectly to ſink the mind i. 300. Falſe ſublime i. 303. 306.
Submiſſion) natural foundation of ſubmiſſion to government i. 236.
Subſtance) defined iii. 406.
Subſtratum) defined iii. 376.
Succeſſion) of perceptions and ideas i. 380. *&c.*
Superlatives)

Superlatives) inferior writers deal in ſuperlatives iii. 195.

Surpriſe) inſtantaneous i. 142. 321. pleaſant or painful according to circumſtances i. 326. &c. Surpriſe is the cauſe of contraſt i. 359. Surpriſe a ſilent paſſion ii. 205. ſtudied in Chineſe gardens iii. 319.

Suſpenſe) an uneaſy ſtate i. 205.

Sweet diſtreſs) explained i. 155.

Swift) his language always ſuited to his ſubject iii. 194. has a peculiar energy of ſtyle iii. 198. compared with Pope iii. 198.

Syllable ii. 239. Syllables long and ſhort ii. 363.

Sympathy) ſympathetic emotion of virtue i. 70. Sympathy i. 229. attractive i. 230. never low nor mean ii. 32. the cement of ſociety ii. 143.

Synthetic) and analytic methods of reaſoning compared i. 31.

Tacitus) excells in drawing characters iii. 182. his ſtyle comprehenſive iii. 204.

Taſſo) cenſured iii. 242.

Taſte) in taſting we feel an impreſſion upon the organ of ſenſe iii. 380. Taſte in the fine arts compared with the moral ſenſe i. 7. its advantages i. 10. &c. Delicacy of taſte i. 136. A low taſte i. 276. The foundation of a right and a wrong in taſte iii. 358. Taſte in the fine arts as well as in morals corrupted by voluptuouſneſs iii. 370. corrupted by love of riches iii. 370. Taſte never naturally bad or wrong iii. 372. Aberrations from a true taſte in the fine arts iii. 366.

Tautology) a blemiſh in writing iii. 205.

Temples) of Ancient and Modern Virtue in the gardens of Stow iii. 348.

Terence) cenſured iii. 288. 290.

Terror) ariſes ſometimes to its utmoſt height inſtantaneouſly i. 143. a ſilent paſſion ii. 205. Objects that ſtrike terror have a fine effect in poetry and painting iii. 211. The terror raiſed by tragedy explained iii. 228.

Theorem) general theorems agreeable i. 255.

Time) paſt time expreſſed as preſent i. 118. Natural computation of time i. 200. &c.

Tone) of mind iii. 378.

Touch) in touching we feel an impreſſion upon the organ of ſenſe iii. 380.

Trachiniens) of Sophocles cenſured iii. 286.

Tragedy) modern tragedy cenſured ii. 155. French tragedy cenſured ii. 159. Note. ii. 194. The Greek tragedy accompanied with muſical notes to aſcertain the pronunciation ii. 350. Tragedy ch. 22. iii. 218. in what reſpect it differs from an epic poem iii. 218. diſtinguiſhed into pathetic and moral iii. 221. its good effects iii. 223. compared with the epic as to the ſubjects proper for each iii. 225. 226. how far it may borrow from hiſtory iii. 234. rule for dividing it into acts iii. 236. double plot in it iii. 251. admits not ſupernatural events iii. 254. its origin iii. 270. Ancient tragedy a continued repreſentation without interruption iii. 271. Conſtitution of the modern drama iii. 273.

Trees) the beſt manner of placing them iii. 307.

Triangle) equilateral, its beauty i. 253.

Tribrachys ii. 459.
Trochæus ii. 459.
Tropes ch. 20. iii. 53.
Uglineſs) proper and figurative iii. 388.
Unbounded proſpect) diſagreeable i. 366. Note.
Uniformity) apt to diſguſt by exceſs i. 253. Uniformity and variety ch. 9. i. 380. The melody ought to be uniform where the things deſcribed are uniform ii. 411. Uniformity defined iii. 390.
Unity) the three unities ch. 23. iii. 259. of action iii. 260. of time and of place iii. 267. Unities of time and place not required in an epic poem iii. 268. ſtrictly obſerved in the Greek tragedy iii. 272. Unity of place in the ancient drama iii. 285. Unities of place and time ought to be ſtrictly obſerved in each act of a modern play iii. 291. Wherein the unity of a garden conſiſts iii. 304.
Unumquodque eodem modo diſſolvitur quo colligatum eſt i. 368.
Vanity) a diſagreeable paſſion i. 134. always appears mean ii. 34.
Variety) diſtinguiſhed from novelty i. 329. Variety ch. 9. i. 380.
Verbal antitheſis) defined ii. 73. 268.
Verſailles) gardens of iii. 310.
Verſe) diſtinguiſhed from proſe ii. 353. Sapphic verſe extremely melodious ii. 358. Iambic leſs ſo ii. 358. Structure of an hexameter line ii. 364. Structure of Engliſh heroic verſe ii. 382. 384. Engliſh monoſyllables arbitrary as to quantity ii. 383. Engliſh heroic lines diſtinguiſhed into four ſorts ii. 421. Latin hexameter compared with Engliſh rhyme

rhyme ii. 441. compared with blank verſe ii. 442. French heroic verſe compared with hexameter and rhyme ii. 443. The Engliſh language incapable of the melody of hexameter verſe ii. 446. For what ſubjects is rhyme proper ii. 447. *&c.* Melody of rhyme ii. 449. Melody of verſe is ſo inchanting as to draw a veil over groſs imperfections ii. 457. Verſes compoſed in the ſhape of an axe or an egg iii. 310.

Violent action) ought to be excluded from the ſtage iii. 254.

Virgil) cenſured for want of connection i. 36. *&c.* his verſe extremely melodious ii. 357. his verſification criticiſed ii. 376. cenſured iii. 179. 194. 246.

Virgil traveſtie) characterized ii. 41.

Voltaire) cenſured iii. 178. 236. 243.

Vowels ii. 238.

Walk) in a garden, whether it ought to be ſtraight or waving iii. 311. artificial walk elevated above the plain iii. 313.

Wall) that is not perpendicular occaſions an uneaſy feeling i. 218.

Water-fall i. 314.

Water-god) ſtatue of, pouring out water iii. 350.

Way of the World) cenſured iii. 266. the unities of place and time ſtrictly obſerved in it iii. 293.

Will) how far our train of perceptions can be regulated by it i. 23. 381. 388. determined by deſire i. 222.

Windows) their proportions iii. 323.

Wiſh) diſtinguiſhed from deſire i. 55.

Wit) defined i. 28. ſeldom united with judgement i. 28.

28. but generally with memory i. 28. not concordant with grandeur i. 377. Wit ch. 13. ii. 58.

Wonder) inſtantaneous i. 143. Wonders and prodigies find ready credit with the vulgar i. 198. Wonder i. 320. ſtudied in Chineſe gardens iii. 319.

Words) play of ii. 228. *&c.* jingle of ii. 231. what are their beſt arrangement in a period ii. 251. A conjunction or disjunction in the members of the thought ought to be imitated in the expreſſion ii. 260. 265. Words expreſſing things connected ought to be placed as near together as poſſible ii. 307. *&c.* In what part of a ſentence doth a word make the greateſt figure ii. 318. Words acquire a beauty from their meaning iii. 139. The words ought to accord with the ſentiment iii. 188. A word is often redoubled to add force to the expreſſion iii. 201.

Writing) a ſubject intended for amuſement may be highly ornamented ii. 9. A grand ſubject appears beſt in a plain dreſs ii. 10.

FINIS.